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THE
NAVIGATION LAWS
OF
GREAT BRITAIN,

HISTORICALLY AND PRACTICALLY CONSIDERED,

WITH REFERENCE TO COMMERCE AND NATIONAL
DEFENCE.

BY
JOSEPH ALLEN,
AUTHOR OF WORKS ON NAVAL HISTORY, &c.

“O, that a man might know
The end of this day’s business ere it come!”—*Shakspeare*.

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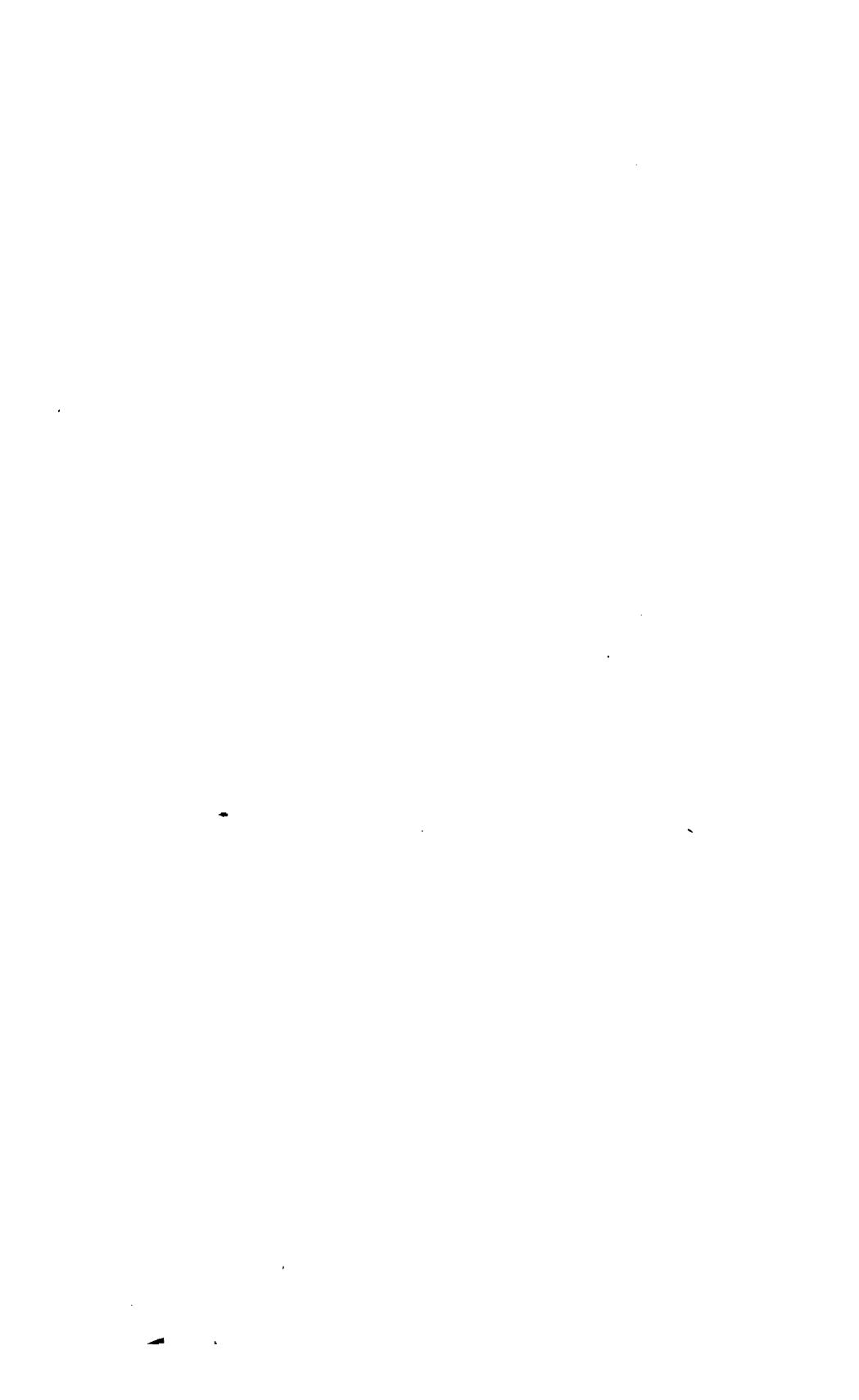
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DEDICATION.

To the British Nation,
THE FOLLOWING PAGES
REFERRING
TO THE MOST IMPORTANT DISCUSSION
THAT EVER OCCUPIED THE ATTENTION
Of Britons,
THE MAINTENANCE OR ANNIHILATION
OF THOSE
Navigation Laws
UNDER WHICH OUR FREEDOM, COMMERCIAL PROSPERITY,
AND
National Supremacy
HAVE BEEN OBTAINED AND HITHERTO PRESERVED,
ABE,
WITH THE MOST ANXIOUS PRAYERS FOR HIS COUNTRY'S
WELFARE,
HUMBLY AND DUTIFULLY INSCRIBED,
BY
The Author.



P R E F A C E.

It may appear to many the height of presumption that an Author, unknown in the field of controversial warfare, and with no peculiar claim to attention, should enter the arena as the exponent of a matter so important to the destinies of Great Britain as that which has recently occupied the attention of the British Legislature—the Navigation Laws. I confess that I approach the subject with a kind of religious awe. I feel that I may, by incaution, do injury to my country, and by my want of personal experience damage its best hopes; or, on the other hand, that my efforts may be deemed unworthy of notice. With this absence of self-reliance, however, I trust that there is the less danger of my failing to support the right cause; inasmuch as it has induced me to base my argument upon the experience of others fully competent to advance a sound and disinterested opinion. I have no connection with party, and am totally removed from undue influence of any kind, with nothing to hope for but the approbation of right-minded individuals, nor to fear but their frown. I know nothing of “Free Trade” nor of

“ Protection;” but I believe that a movement is taking place which, if not checked, will end in our irretrievable ruin; and, as a Briton, I consider I am bound to use my best exertions, feeble though they may be, to arrest it.

In common, I believe, with the great mass of my countrymen, I was ignorant of the nature of our Navigation Laws. So unobtrusive are they in their operation, that it was only by those who considered themselves injured by certain Government relaxations that the casual observer was reminded of their existence; and it was not until the annihilation of those laws was attempted that the public took any heed of the matter. It was then by many looked upon merely as “a branch “ of the free-trade question;” by others, “a ship-“ owners’ question;” and by others, that the repeal was objected to only by “National-defence “ Alarmists.” The most vital consideration was, in my humble opinion, entirely (at least by the great bulk of the community) overlooked. It was not viewed as a question in which the prosperity of our commerce was deeply involved. Without doubt the dispute has an important bearing upon free trade, upon shipowners and ship-builders, and also with reference to its probable effect upon the reserve of British seamen applicable to the Royal Navy in time of war. But these considerations taken individually are, in my mind, subor-

dinate to the one grand principle of our exalted state as a nation — commercial supremacy. It would be quite possible to our shipowning interest to combat free trade and foreign shipping by transferring the scene of its operations to a more prolific soil, and by employing the weapons of foreigners—cheap ships and cheap sailors. The Royal Navy might possibly be supplied by a cumbrous artificial reserve, although it could only be maintained at an enormous cost to the country; but in each case there must be the presupposition that the balance of trade remained in our favour. It is from successful commerce that our power springs. England must be pre-eminent in the scale of nations by the annexation of wealth with physical energy. Her high position can only be creditably maintained by an undeviating flow of commerce, which will afford the means of defending her rights when attacked, or of chastising the insolence of her enemies.

The Navigation Laws have hitherto bound to us by the strongest of ties our colonial possessions, which should be viewed as the choicest jewels of our beloved Queen's diadem. Instead of being separated from the parent-country, as they would most unquestionably have been had not those laws united them to it by what may at times appear to have been a galling chain, they are now linked to us by a community of interests as much as by

feelings of consanguinity. But were that “freedom” conceded, which small cliques or insignificant though artful minorities demand, their ruin, or at least their total eventual alienation from Great Britain, must follow.

It would, however, be doing gross injustice to the British legislature to imagine that a change so fraught with peril is about to be lightly passed into law: Two Committees, the first in the House of Commons, the other in the House of Lords, have had before them merchants, shipowners, shipbuilders, statists, brokers, and even foreigners, to furnish data upon which to ground their decision; and I do not for one moment doubt, that their verdict will be such as the country will have cause to approve. My endeavour has been to render the gist of enormous parliamentary blue books available to those who do not possess the time, or the patience, to wade through the undigested originals. I prefer no other claim to attention than that which belongs to every Englishman endued with a patriotic spirit, and anxious to render his freely offered services available upon what he considers to be a question of the most vital importance to his country.

GREENWICH HOSPITAL,
January 1st, 1849.

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
HISTORICAL CONSIDERATION.	
Chapter I. Advent of Navigation Laws	1
Chapter II. Cromwell's Navigation Act, its alleged and real consequences	17
Chapter III. The Act of Navigation	25
Chapter IV. The second Dutch war	33
Chapter V. Further effects of the Navigation Laws	38
Chapter VI. The Navigation Laws as they are	44
Chapter VII. Nelson and Collingwood supporters of the Navigation Laws	53

PRACTICAL CONSIDERATION WITH REFERENCE TO COMMERCE.

Evidence of G. Richardson Porter, Esq.	65
" David Cooper Aylwin, Esq.	84
" Gustav Godeffroy, Esq.	98
" John Diston Powles, Esq.	103
" Christian Allhusen, Esq.	107
" William Rushton Coulborn, Esq.	113
" Thomas A. Mitchell, Esq., M.P.	120
" George F. Young, Esq.	125
" Joshua Wilson, Esq.	136
" Thomas B. Simey, Esq.	144
" William J. Hall, Esq.	149
" William Briggs, Esq.	151
" Robert B. Minturn, Esq.	155
" Money Wigram, Esq.	160
" William Tindall, Esq.	166
" John P. Younghusband, Esq.	170
" Robert Anderson, Esq.	174

	PAGE
Evidence of Duncan Dunbar, Esq.	177
,, John Horsley Palmer, Esq.	179
,, Patrick F. Robertson, Esq.	180
,, Augustus Bosanquet, Esq.	181
,, Russell Ellice, Esq.	185
,, Michael M'Chlery, Esq.	186
,, Henry Davidson, Esq.	187
,, Alexander Geddes, Esq.	188
,, William R. Sandbach, Esq.	192
,, Thomas Bouch, Esq.	193
,, Francis Shand, Esq.	196
,, Josias Booker, Esq.	198
,, John Alexander Hankey, Esq.	200
,, George Booker, Esq.	205
,, Robert Brooks, Esq.	206
,, John Gore, Esq.	208
,, Frederick Parbury, Esq.	209
,, Hugh Hunter, Esq.	211
,, Charles Enderby, Esq.	213
,, Thomas Augustus Gibb, Esq.	216
,, William Scott, Esq.	218
,, James Dowie, Esq.	220
,, Robert Gillespie, Esq.	223
,, Robert Alexander Gray, Esq.	225
,, Mark Whitwill, Esq.	229
,, William Richmond, Esq.	233
,, John Mitchell Mitchell, Esq.	239
,, George Lyon Phillips, Esq.	244
,, William Henry Noss, Esq.	ib.
REVIEW OF THE EVIDENCE	245
DEDUCTIONS	267
Trade with India	268
China Trade	269
Australian Trade	ib.
British West Indies	270
The Mauritius	ib.
The Canadas	271
The United States	ib.
The Baltic	273
Russia	274
The United Netherlands	ib.
France	ib.
The Mediterranean	275

CONTENTS.

xi

PAGE

South America	275
Foreign West Indies	<i>ib.</i>
The Whale Fishery	<i>ib.</i>
British and Foreign Shipbuilding	276
British and Foreign Seamen	278
The Apprenticeship Clause	279
British and Foreign Captains	<i>ib.</i>
Temperance Ships	280
Warehousing	<i>ib.</i>
Insurance	281
Cost of Freights	<i>ib.</i>
Concluding Observation	282

**PRACTICAL CONSIDERATION WITH REFERENCE TO
NATIONAL DEFENCE.**

Evidence of Admiral Sir T. Byam Martin, G.C.B.	284
" Captain Sir James Stirling	291
" Captain J. Toup Nicolas, C.B., K.H.	295
" Mark Whitwill, Esq.	296
" Rear-Admiral Sir Thomas J. Cochrane, K.C.B.	298
" Captain M. F. F. Berkeley, C.B.	300
" Robert Anderson, Esq.	302
" Lieutenant J. H. Brown, R.N.	303

APPENDIX, A.

Bill to amend the Laws in force for the encouragement of British Shipping and Navigation	307
---	-----

APPENDIX, B.

Extracts from Statutes of the Realm	314
---	-----

APPENDIX, C.

Comparative View of the Navigation Law of 1660 and 1847	315
---	-----

APPENDIX, D.

Schedule of Petitions presented to the House of Lords in reference to the Navigation Laws, during the Session 1847-8	338
---	-----

APPENDIX, E.

Letter addressed by Sir John Gladstone, Bart., to his Son, the Right Hon. W. Ewart Gladstone, M.P.	341
---	-----

THE NAVIGATION LAWS
OR
GREAT BRITAIN,
HISTORICALLY CONSIDERED.

CHAPTER I.

ADVENT OF NAVIGATION LAWS.

IT can scarcely be necessary to recur to the first establishment of protective laws with reference to the marine of England. Indeed, such recurrence would be wholly superfluous, were it not for the fact, that causes similar to those which led to their enactment, remain to some extent, and must ever exist, while England is an independent island, relying upon her own strong arm for defence. Until within the last thirty years, it was almost universally admitted that the maritime interests of this country were closely interwoven with her security, independence, and prosperity. A war of unparalleled duration furnished convincing proofs that our very existence depended upon our power on the ocean; but, the emergency having ceased, the peril of the nation was forgotten;—that is, it was forgotten by those whose cupidity overwhelmed their shallow patriotism, when the danger had ceased to exist. The manufacturers, whose homes and hearths had been preserved to them free and

unpolluted, forgot all their obligations to the power that had been instrumental in their preservation—forgot that they were largely indebted for their safety to their “wooden walls,” and to those gallant men who had risked life, health, and all that was dear to human nature, to meet the enemies of England upon the ocean. The manufacturers from thenceforth determined to consider bygone obligations in the light of a cancelled account.

The Navigation Laws of Great Britain were instituted—as the preambles to every Act, or proposed Act, of Parliament, save the last, set forth—“for the encouragement of British shipping and navigation.” The Act, introduced by Mr. Labouchere*, in express terms repudiates the principle.

England had no royal, and a very small mercantile navy, prior to the introduction of conserving laws. From year to year the shipping of the merchants were impressed into the service of the state, a nominal sum only being paid for their hire. In the reign of Richard II. the unprotected state of the country was such as to demand the serious attention of the British Legislature. In October 1378, Sir Richard Scrope, steward of the household, stated in the House of Commons, by command of the King, that the realm of England, as well as his other territories, were everywhere beset and surrounded by enemies, who increased daily; and he demanded a further sum to enable the King to carry on the war. In their turn the Commons pleaded that they had never before been in such poverty. They stated their distresses to have arisen in great part from the ravages committed by the enemy upon their sea coasts; and further complained, that the trade of the country was stopped, by the withdrawal of their ships from all employments of trade to serve in the war†. At this period England was truly in a lamentable

* Appendix, A.

† Nicolas's “History of the Royal Navy,” vol. ii., p. 273.

condition. When Parliament met in April 1379, it was stated that an attack had been made upon Scarborough, and that large sums had been taken away in booty or ransoms; that many of the inhabitants were in prison at Boulogne and other places, and the King was supplicated to send assistance thither to save the town from being pillaged and burnt. But the complaints uttered appeared, for the time, doomed to pass without permanent remedy. A force was sent, and which for the time brought relief; but, as it may be in the present day, the dog-star of "free trade" was in the ascendancy. The same Parliament that had apparently listened to the complaints of the people, instead of devising means to protect the country, passed a law freely opening the ports to the merchants of Genoa, Venice, Catalonia, Arragon, and of other countries westward, being in amity with England. Permission was given them to bring their carracks, ships, gallies, or other vessels, laden or unladen, and to sell their merchandises and ship cargoes of wool, leather, woolfels, tin, and other staple, paying at the ports the same customs and subsidies as they would pay if they were to bring the same goods to the staple of Calais*. The relaxation, Calais being at that time a kind of free port, amounted to a repeal of all obnoxious imposts, such as, in these degenerate days, necessary restrictions or protections are termed; and it was possibly adopted as the sure method of giving vigour to the trade and maritime strength of the country.

In a work recently published, styled, "The Anatomy of "the Navigation Laws," having for its object to impress the public mind with the importance of "free trade," and the injury inflicted thereon by the Navigation Laws, this fact is suppressed, whether intentionally or through ignorance, must be left to the reader's imagination. Had the object of the

* Nicolas's "History of the Royal Navy," vol. ii., p. 8. The authority quoted is, *Statutes of the Realm*.

writer or writers of that book* been openly stated, there would have been less fear of any misconception on the part of its readers. All who opened its pages would, in that case, have been duly informed, that history was about to be put to the torture, in order to extort from it the materials whereupon to frame a charge against the maritime laws of England.

But there was another law enacted by the same Parliament, which should be noticed. The seamen, employed in the ships retained for the defence of the realm, found their liberties infringed, and themselves condemned to serve for a merely nominal stipend; while foreigners and others were in the receipt of high, or, at least, remunerative wages. The men very naturally deserted from an employment so unprofitable, and hence the necessity for an enactment to inflict upon such individuals severe punishment. It was, therefore, determined that mariners deserting the King's service should be fined double the wages they had taken, and, moreover, be imprisoned for a year; that sheriffs, mayors, bailiffs, should seize and imprison such fugitive mariners on the certificates of the admirals or their lieutenants; and that sergeants-at-arms, masters, and others, who took bribes for allowing them to escape, should suffer the same punishment†.

England, without doubt, in the fourteenth century differed widely from England in the nineteenth. In the first period she was without ships worthy the appellation, her commerce was at its lowest ebb, and her honour, almost without a metaphor, was in the dust‡. In the latter she reigns paramount among the nations of the earth. Her

* In a volume, entitled "The Anatomy of the Navigation Laws Dissected," by a young Barrister, the *animus* of Mr. Ricardo's work is ably exposed, and the great bulk of its fallacies laid bare.

† Nicolas's "History of the Royal Navy," vol. ii., p. 277.

‡ Kent, in his "Biographia Nautica," vol. i., p. 288, terms it "a disgraceful era."

navy, if duly regarded and protected, may safely bid defiance to the whole maritime force of the world; and her commerce, though unhappily it has been cruelly tampered with by speculative theorists, yet survives and gives to the great mass of her children subsistence, if not the means of comfort or affluence. It would be well for politicians to take a mental survey of the causes which have led to the remarkable elevation of this favoured land. The reader conversant with our history will have no difficulty in doing this, and it will be to me a matter of considerable surprise if he does not arrive at the conclusion, that the strong arm which, under Providence, has worked the change, has been our Royal and Mercantile Navy.

Did, however, the free trade movement just alluded to, have the desired effect of re-invigorating commerce and our maritime strength? History answers this question in the negative. Year after year complaints accumulated. A war had to be carried on, and it was a war of defence from French and Spaniards. Owners of shipping continually represented the injuries they sustained, from the monopolisation of their ships and men; but the necessity was a sufficient justification for the continuance of a state of affairs so oppressive to them. In 1386 a formidable expedition was equipped in France for the invasion of England; and, but for a succession of providential gales, the probability was in favour of its success. The winds did for England that which, in its state of exhaustion, her maritime strength could not possibly have effected.

Hostilities having at length ceased between France and England, attention was turned towards the best means of fostering the navy. The Parliament re-assembled on the 12th November, 1390, and took a very important, if not the first, step towards establishing the principle of the Navigation Laws. It was enacted that "all merchants of the "realm of England shall freight the ships of the said realm,

“ and *not foreign ships*; so that the owners of the said ships may take reasonably for the freight of the same.” Regulations were also made to prevent the “master ship-men” or “master mariners” from demanding exorbitant wages, which, it may be inferred, they could obtain from “aliens*,”—those “aliens” being, as a matter of course, better able to pay high wages, from having been for so long a time draining England of her resources in the shape of freightage. In the following year (1391) it was found that the statute compelling our merchants to freight British ships, had not been duly observed; whereupon the Commons petitioned the King, stating, that inasmuch as the navy of England was greatly weakened and impaired, no English merchant might be allowed to put goods and merchandise in a foreign vessel in any place where they could freight English ships, upon pain of forfeiting the goods shipped in foreign vessels. This was urged upon the King’s favourable consideration, “as a work of charity, and for the maintenance and increase of the navy of England.” The King replied to their petition—“Let the statute thereupon be kept and observed†.”

Mr. Ricardo thus alludes to this Act:—“The first Navigation Act did not work well, and had, in the next year, to be amended. It was then enacted, ‘that English merchants, ‘being in foreign ports, and not finding any sufficient English vessels there, might ship their goods on board foreign vessels,’—a help to trade, no doubt, but rendered useless by a law made eight years afterwards—“That the merchants of England should export their merchandise in English vessels only, and the owners were desired to carry them for reasonable freights.’

* Nicolas’s “History of the Royal Navy,” vol. ii., p. 332.

† *Ibid.* The writer (the late Sir Harris Nicolas) adds, “a command which it may be hoped will be repeated by every Sovereign of England, if ever it be attempted, by repealing the Navigation Laws, to destroy the prosperity and power of England.”

“ What the reasonable freights were, we are not told. But
“ the probability is, that certain British shipowners made
“ an outcry against the foreigners who came from ports
“ where English vessels were not to be had, taking out-
“ ward cargoes, because they had caught them carrying at
“ reasonable freights.”

For the *verbatim* quotations I have given from Sir Harris Nicolas's elaborate work, original authorities are furnished; but Mr. Ricardo has only supplied a sort of loose translation or paraphrase which suits his own purpose, and gives a semblance of groundword for his opinions. Whether the Act of Parliament of 1390 was the original, or an amendment only of an Act passed in 1381, cannot be of much signification to the argument. But it is of great importance that the reader should mark the distinction between the passages, “ *so that the owners of the said ships may take reasonably for the freight of the same,*” and the Ricardo version, “ *and the owners were desired to carry them for reasonable freights**.”

Dr. Campbell, who wrote his “ Naval History” at a period when it was not an object either to add to or detract from the intrinsic merits of the legislative enactments of the period, thus epitomizes our early fiscal and maritime regulations:—“ Edward I. had from the merchants a twentieth, “ afterwards a seventh of their commodities: he imposed “ a custom of a noble upon every sack of wool, which, in “ his son's time, was doubled. In Edward II.'s time, we “ find that the sea-ports were for twelve years charged to “ set out ships provided with ammunition and provisions, “ sometimes for one month, sometimes for four; the num- “ ber of ships more or less according as occasion required. “ Edward III. raised his customs in the port of London to “ a thousand marks per month. But now, under the “ minority of King Richard II., when things could not be

* Appendix, B.

“ carried on with so high a hand—and yet the necessity of
“ maintaining a constant squadron at sea for the security
“ of the coasts, was apparent—a new order was taken
“ equally agreeable to justice and reason, for imposing
“ certain duties on all ships sailing in the North Seas, that
“ is, from the mouth of the Thames northward. These
“ duties consisted in paying sixpence per ton, and such
“ vessels only were excused as were bound from Flanders
“ to London with merchandise, or from London to Calais
“ with wool and hides. Fishermen, particularly such as
“ were employed in the herring fishery, were to pay six-
“ pence per ton every week; other fishermen, a like duty
“ every three weeks; ships employed in the coal trade to
“ Newcastle once in three months; merchantmen sailing
“ to Prussia, Norway, or Sweden, a like duty. As for
“ the authority by which all this was done, it will best
“ appear by the title of the record, which runs thus:—
“ ‘ This is the ordinance and grant by advice of the mer-
“ ‘ chants of London and other merchants to the north, by
“ ‘ the assent of all the Commons in Parliament, the Earl
“ ‘ of Northumberland, and the Mayor of London, *for the*
“ ‘ *guard and tuition of the sea coasts* under the jurisdic-
“ ‘ *tion of the Admiral of the North Seas,’ ” &c.*

It may be long ere a seed brings forth its proper fruit, yet if the germinating principle be sound, and the soil suitable, it will, unless destroyed by adverse circumstances, ultimately yield its increase. With reference to protective Navigation Laws, however, the unproductive nature of the times delayed the expected harvest. Although the Parliament of Richard II., nor any other Parliament, could not, as Mr. Ricardo remarks, “make a navy,” it was quite competent for such legislative bodies to foster, or pass laws which should have a tendency to increase the navy. Maritime superiority could not by possibility be effected in a moment. It would be equally feasible that, “at one fell

“swoop,” all reasonable men should be deluded by specious arguments into becoming free traders, renouncing for ever those common-sense notions which experience of the past and present have engendered. A century passed over, but not without affording evidence of improvement. In 1413, the trade with Morocco commenced. In 1415, Henry V. took Harfleur, after a stout and lengthened resistance; and in the following year, a retaliatory attack of the French upon Portsmouth and the Isle of Wight, was repulsed, and Henry V. pursued his successful career until he obtained the command of the Narrow Sea. In order the more pointedly to assert his dominion, it is recorded that he had two of his ships adorned with purple sails, and embroidered with the arms of England and France; one of which was styled the King’s chamber, the other, his hall, thereby affecting to keep his Court upon the ocean. But a period of anarchy and civil war succeeded that of prosperity, and all progress towards commercial or other improvement was consequently arrested; and the French, emboldened by our weakness, were enabled to make a descent upon England in 1457. In 1458, the trade to the Levant commenced, and some other advances were made towards an extension of commerce; but our marine was still at a miserably low ebb, and the Portuguese and Spaniards very far superior to us in ships, seamen, and the art of navigation. Under such circumstances, it is not surprising that the Navigation Laws fell into desuetude, and that foreign ships gradually crept once more into general employment. There is one consideration which must have had, perhaps more than any other, a tendency to prevent the increase of our maritime navy—the law which made the property of the merchant available to the Crown. A more severe tax upon private energy was never imposed; and it is rather surprising than otherwise, that private merchants could be found hardy enough to speculate

in shipping, when they could not know in how short a space of time their property would be impressed for the service of the state. And although sums were paid in consideration of the services thus rendered, yet they were not equivalent to the injury sustained. No payment which the Government had it in its power to make, could adequately remunerate the merchant for the detention of that property, from the active employment of which in trade he derived his support. To Henry VII., therefore, who laid the foundation of a royal navy, must be conceded the merit of originating the plan by which alone the merchant could hope to be relieved from this heavy tax upon his property, and the maritime interests freed from the incubus which rested upon it.

But as in the case of shadowing out the Navigation Laws by Richard II., so it was easier to design a royal navy than to form it. Dr. Campbell says:—"About the " like sum (£14,000) he (Henry VII.) laid out in the " construction of a new ship called the *Great Harry*, and " which, properly speaking, was the first ship of the royal " navy; for though he, as well as other princes, hired " many ships exclusive of those furnished by the ports, " when he had occasion to transport forces abroad, yet he " seems to have been the only King who thought of avoiding " this inconvenience by raising such a naval force as " might be at all times sufficient for the service of the " state." Henry VIII. zealously carried out the design of his royal father, by the establishment of the Royal Dock-Yards at Woolwich and Deptford, and by causing many ships to be built for the royal service. His successors acted up to the same plan, and thereby formed the nucleus of that force which successfully resisted the "invincible "Armada" of Spain.

Meanwhile, however, the shipping of neighbouring and rival nations being more free from the charge, always a

serious one, upon England, of providing the means for insular defence, had increased. Edward VI. and his successor upon the throne, Mary, had used some efforts to check this rapid growth of foreign prosperity, in as far as it was derivable, from England, by placing certain restrictions upon foreign merchants, which restrictions were made the subject of a remonstrance to Elizabeth. The merchants of the Hanse towns in particular loudly complained of the ill-treatment which they considered they had received; but that energetic sovereign replied, that as she would not innovate anything, so she would protect them still in the immunities and condition *in which she found them*. "Which," says Campbell, "not contenting them, their commerce was soon "suspended for a time, to the great advantage of the "English merchants; for they trying what they could do "themselves therein, their adventures and returns proving "successful, they took the whole trade into their hands, "and so divided themselves into staplers and merchant "adventurers, the one residing constantly at some one "place, the other keeping their course, and adventuring to "other towns and states abroad, with cloth and other "manufactures. This so nettled the Hanse, that they "devised all the ways that a discontented people could, to "draw upon our new staplers or adventurers the ill opinion "of other nations and states; but that proving of too "small force to stop the current of so strong a trade as "they were now run into, they resorted to some other "practices*."

The "other practices" referred to, were an appeal to the Emperor Rodolph II. and other foreign potentates, which, however, had no other effect upon Elizabeth, than that of causing her to reiterate that the merchants of the Hanse towns should have "the same privileges as other strangers." The Hanse merchants thus foiled, obtained an imperial

* Campbell, vol. i., p. 386.

edict, prohibiting all English commerce with Germany; to which Elizabeth replied by a proclamation, in consequence of which sixty sail of their shipping were embargoed in the Tagus. A general assembly was thereupon held at Lubeck, to concert measures for distressing the English; upon learning which, Elizabeth, who had previously intended to remove the embargo, as a measure of conciliation, ordered the ships and their cargoes to be confiscated, sparing only two ships, which were released, that they might carry home the intelligence. An equally futile attempt was made to shake Elizabeth's determination by Sigismond King of Poland, who threatened, as the Zolvverein may do at the present juncture, "retaliation." The Queen answered the ambassador, "that the King his master made no right estimate of his own power, and that himself (the ambassador) was very little fit for the employment in which she found him." "Thus," adds Campbell, "were we ridded for ever of these incorporated foreign factors, and our own merchants established in the right of managing our commerce*." Why did not Mr. Ricardo include the above portion of Elizabeth's history in his chapter upon the

WISDOM OF OUR ANCESTORS ?

To Queen Elizabeth we are largely indebted for those vital principles embodied in the existing Navigation Laws, of having a majority of English sailors in our merchant ships, and the exclusion of foreigners from the coasting trade. The Act containing these restrictions was passed to 1563.

Dutch shipping had prospered exceedingly in the reign

* " While the House of Lancaster possessed the throne, extraordinary favour was shown to the Hanse Towns, the inhabitants of which had great privileges granted to them in England, and were thereby enabled to engross —or, as they styled it, to manage—a good part of our trade; the rest was, in a manner, absorbed by Florentines and other Italians, which was partly owing to the necessities of Henry V. during his French wars."—*Campbell's Lives of the Admirals.*

of Elizabeth, by being leagued with England in the war with Spain. But when James I. ascended the throne, negotiations for peace were entered into, and in 1604, a treaty of peace, on the part of England, was signed in London. The war being to a certain extent popular, this treaty of peace gave some little dissatisfaction at home ; but it was still more unpalatable to the Dutch. A lucrative branch of their trade was destroyed thereby, and the losers are described as having become quite exasperated at this act of James. It must have been considered a novelty to find one country thus questioning the proceedings of another ; yet so it was that the Dutch from thenceforth became extremely disposed to measure their strength upon the ocean with England. Powerful enough to contest with the Spaniards, Holland continued the war single-handed, and, at the same time, assumed an offensive kind of equality with the ships of England. James resented this disposition to quarrel, and, in order to maintain that dignity upon the ocean to which his royal predecessors had asserted a right, he gave directions for a fleet to be fitted out, and the command given to Sir William Monson. This fleet put to sea ; " but," says Campbell, " he (Sir William Monson) found it a very difficult matter to execute his commission. The Dutch, whenever he conferred with any of their chief officers, gave him fine language and fair promises ; but they minded them very little, taking our ships upon every frivolous pretence, and treating those they found on board with great severity, till such time as it appeared the Admiral would not have such usage, and began to make reprisals, threatening to hang as pirates people who showed themselves very little better in their actions. There were also high contests about the flag, which began through some accidental civilities shown to the Hollanders in the late reign, when they sailed under the command of English admirals upon joint expeditions,

“ and were on that account treated as if they had been
“ Her Majesty’s own subjects ; which favours they now
“ pretended to claim as prerogatives due to them in quality
“ of an independent state.” Another subject of contro-
versy was the right of fishing upon the English coast,
but which was apparently settled to the satisfaction of all
parties in 1608.

It was with reference to the disputes at this period respecting the honour of the flag, the right of fishing, and the Spanish claim to the sovereignty of the Indian Seas, that Hugo Grotius wrote his Latin treatise, entitled, “ *Mare Libe-
rum ; seu de Jure quod Batavis competit ad Indica Com-
mercia.* ” This book was printed in 1609 ; and admirably served to encourage the Dutch in their rivalry with England, so much so, that, in 1618, the question of a right to the fishery on the English coast was revived. It is shrewdly surmised that a well-timed bribe in an influential quarter did more towards putting the question to sleep than the correspondence to which it gave rise. Shortly after Charles I. came to the throne, the country became involved in a war, perhaps the most inglorious of any in which England was ever engaged ; and the French and Dutch presumed upon our reverses, and, so to speak, imbecility. Hugo Grotius’s book was reprinted, and the French egged on the Dutch to dispute the point *vi et armis*.

In 1635 the apprehensions of Charles were excited by the league entered into between France and Holland, with the ultimate object of declaring war against Spain, and parcelling out the Spanish Netherlands between the two countries. Aroused to a sense of the danger in which England would be placed, should France and Holland be able to effect their object, Charles determined to be passive no longer. Unhappily, he had recourse to an expedient for equipping a fleet—that of levying ship money without the

concurrence of Parliament—which led to his death upon the scaffold ; but he did fit out a fleet, in order to maintain his claim to the sovereignty upon the ocean, declaring that to be the only guarantee for the independence of the nation. Mr. Secretary Coke, by the King's orders, addressed a spirited letter, dated April 16, 1635, to Sir William Boswell, ambassador at the Hague, containing the following memorable passage :—

“ First, we hold it a principle not to be denied, that the King of Great Britain is a monarch at land and sea to the full extent of his dominions ; and that it concerneth him as much to maintain his sovereignty in all the British seas as within his three kingdoms ; because without that, these cannot be kept safe, nor he maintain his honour and due respect with other nations. But commanding the seas he may cause his neighbours, and all countries, to stand upon their guard whensoever he thinks fit. And this cannot be doubted, that whosoever will encroach upon him by sea, will do it by land also, when they see their time. To such presumption MARE LIBERUM gave the first warning piece, which must be answered by a defence of MARE CLAUSUM*, not so much by discourses as by the louder language of a powerful navy, to be better understood when overstrained patience seeth no hope of preserving her right by other means.”

In 1636 the King sent a fleet of sixty sail to sea, under the command of the Earl of Northumberland. The fleet sailed first to the Downs, and from thence to the northward, where the Dutch fishing vessels—termed busses—were as usual busily engaged. The Admiral ordered them to desist, but his orders being disregarded, he fired upon and dis-

* The title of an elaborate Latin treatise written by the learned Selden in reply to “Mare Liberum,” &c. This book was published in folio in 1639, London. In 1652 it was translated by order of Cromwell, and 200 copies printed by Du Guard.

persed them. Subsequently the Dutch applied to the Earl to mediate with the King, and proposed to pay the sum of £.30,000 for permission to fish that year, and an annual tribute for the future. This firm and unequivocal mode of proceeding had the desired effect for the time, but it was afterwards brought forward as an aggressive act committed against their commerce, and upon defenceless vessels; whereas it is a fact, that the fishing busses were under the protection of ten ships-of-war, which offered no resistance.

I have been the more diffuse in narrating the series of events which preceded the passing of Cromwell's Navigation Act, because I find it broadly stated, by witnesses giving evidence before the Committees of the Houses of Parliament, and re-echoed by the Free Navigation Champion, Mr. Ricardo, that the first Navigation Law was caused solely by jealousy of the Dutch. It will, I think, be apparent, however, to all reasoning men, from what has been and what will hereafter be adduced, that England was driven, in defence of her own existence as a nation, to conserve her marine; and further, that had the dogma of the legislators who now exercise control over her interests, been at that time submitted to, England, like the Netherlands, would, in a few years, have fallen a prey to France and Holland. And that in using vigorous measures to enforce the honour of the flag—to protect the fisheries—and subsequently to preserve to ourselves the exclusive right of trading with our own colonies and possessions—there was a higher and more praiseworthy motive than that of mere jealousy or short-sighted covetousness. It was a struggle on the part of England to maintain an independent position, to which end it was imperative, that, in all matters relating to the ocean, she should be supreme.

CHAPTER II.

CROMWELL'S NAVIGATION ACT, ITS ALLEGED AND REAL CONSEQUENCES.

As Cromwell's Navigation Act is now almost buried beneath a load of amendments, it has been thought advisable to give it entire.

“An Act for increase of Shipping, and encouragement of the Navigation of this Nation.

“ For the increase of the shipping, and the encouragement of the navigation of this nation, which, under the good providence and protection of God, is so great a means of the welfare and safety of this Commonwealth; Be it Enacted, by this present Parliament, and the authority thereof, That from and after the first day of December, one thousand six hundred fifty-one, and from thenceforwards, no goods or commodities whatsoever, of the growth, production, or manufacture of Asia, Africa, or America, or of any part thereof; or of any islands belonging to them or any of them, or which are described or laid down in the usual maps or cards of those places, as well of the English plantations as others, shall be imported or brought into this Commonwealth of England, or into Ireland, or any other lands, islands, plantations, or territories to this Commonwealth belonging, or in their possession, in any other ship or ships, vessel or vessels whatsoever, but only in such as do truly and without fraud belong only to the people of this Commonwealth, or the plantations thereof, as the proprietors or right owners thereof: And whereof the master and mariners are also, for the most part of them, of the people of this Commonwealth, under the penalty of the forfeiture and loss of all the goods that shall be imported contrary to this Act; as also of the ship (with all her tackle, guns, and apparel), in which the said goods or commodities shall be so brought in and imported. The one moiety to the use of the Commonwealth, and the other moiety to the use and behoof of any person or persons who

shall seize the said goods or commodities, and shall prosecute the same in any Court of Record within this Commonwealth. And it is further Enacted, by the authority aforesaid, That no goods or commodities of the growth, production, or manufacture of Europe, or of any part thereof, shall, after the first day of December, one thousand six hundred fifty and one, be imported or brought into this Commonwealth of England, or into Ireland, or any other lands, islands, plantations, or territories, to this Commonwealth belonging, or in their possession, in any ship or ships, vessel or vessels whatsoever, but in such as do truly and without fraud belong only to the people of this Commonwealth, as the true owners and proprietors thereof, and in no other, except only such foreign ships and vessels as do truly and properly belong to the people of that country or place, of which the said goods are the growth, production, or manufacture; or to such ports where the said goods can only be, or most usually are first shipped for transportation; And that under the same penalty of forfeiture and loss expressed in the former branch of this Act, the said forfeitures to be recovered and employed as is therein expressed. And it is further Enacted, by the authority aforesaid, That no goods or commodities that are of foreign growth, production, or manufacture, and which are to be brought into this Commonwealth, in shipping belonging to the people thereof, shall be by them shipped or brought from any other place or places, country or countries, but only from those of their said growth, production, or manufacture; or from those ports where the said goods and commodities can only, or are, or usually have been first shipped for transportation; And from none other places or countries, under the same penalty of forfeiture and loss expressed in the first branch of this Act, the said forfeitures to be recovered and employed as is therein expressed. And it is further Enacted, by the authority aforesaid, That no sort of cod-fish, ling, herring, pilchard, or any other kind of salted fish, usually fished for, and caught by the people of this nation; nor any oil made, or that shall be made of any kind of fish whatsoever; nor any whale-fins, or whale-bones, shall from henceforth be imported into this Commonwealth, or into Ireland, or any other lands, islands, plantations, or territories thereto belonging, or in their possession, but only such as shall be caught in vessels that do or shall truly and properly belong to the people of this nation, as proprietors and right owners thereof: And the said fish to be cured, and the oil aforesaid, made by the people of this said Commonwealth, under the penalty and loss expressed in the said first branch of this present Act; the said forfeit to be recovered and employed as is there expressed. And it is further Enacted, by the authority aforesaid, That no sort of cod, ling, herring, pilchard, or any other kind of salted fish whatsoever, which shall be caught and cured by the people of this Commonwealth,

shall be from and after the first day of February, one thousand six hundred fifty-three, exported from any place or places belonging to this Commonwealth, in any other ship or ships, vessel or vessels, save only in such as do truly and properly appertain to the people of this Commonwealth, as right owners; and whereof the master and mariners are for the most part of them English, under the penalty and loss expressed in the said first branch of this present Act; the said forfeit to be recovered and employed as is there expressed. Provided always, That this Act, nor anything therein contained, extend not, or be meant to restrain the importation of any of the commodities of the straits or Levant seas, loaden in the shipping of this nation as aforesaid, at the usual ports or places for lading of them heretofore within the said straits or Levant seas, though the said commodities be not of the very growth of the said places. Provided also, That this Act nor anything therein contained, extend not, nor be meant to restrain the importing of any East India commodities loaden in the shipping of this nation, at the usual port or places for lading of them heretofore in any part of those seas, to the southward and eastward of Cabo Bona Esperanza, although the said ports be not the very places of their growth. Provided also, That it shall and may be lawful to and for any of the people of this Commonwealth, in vessels or ships to them belonging, and whereof the master and mariners are of this nation as aforesaid, to load and bring in from any of the ports of Spain and Portugal, all sorts of goods or commodities that have come from, or any way belonged unto the plantations or dominions of either of them respectively: Be it also further Enacted, by the authority aforesaid, That from henceforth, it shall not be lawful to any person or persons whatsoever, to load or cause to be loaden and carried in any bottom or bottoms, ship or ships, vessel or vessels whatsoever, whereof any stranger or strangers born (unless such as be denizens or naturalized), be owners, part owners, or master, any fish, victual, wares, or things of what kind or nature soever the same shall be, from one port or creek of this Commonwealth to another port or creek of the same, under penalty to every one that shall offend contrary to the true meaning of this branch of this present Act, to forfeit all the goods that shall be so laden or carried, as also the ship upon which they shall be so laden or carried, the same forfeit to be recovered and employed as directed in the first branch of this present Act. Lastly, That this Act, nor anything therein contained, extend not to bullion, nor yet to any goods taken, or that shall be taken, by way of reprisal, by any ship or ships, having commission from this Commonwealth. Provided, That this Act, or anything therein contained, shall not extend, nor be construed to extend to any silk or silk wares which shall be brought by land from any parts of Italy, and there bought with

the proeced of English commodities, sold either for money or in barter; but that it shall and may be lawful for any of the people of this Commonwealth to ship the same in English vessels from Ostend, Newport, Rotterdam, Middleburgh, Amsterdam, or any ports thereabouts; the owners and proprietors first making oath by themselves, or other credible witness, before the Commissioners of the Customs for the time being, or their deputies, or one of the Barons of the Exchequer, that the goods aforesaid were so bought for his or their own proper account in Italy.

“Passed the ninth of October, 1651.”

Mr. Ricardo says—“ The first effect of these restrictions “ was war with the Dutch,” and adds—

“ Ten years of peace followed this outbreak, during which the Dutch regained their ground, and, spite of our restrictions, prospered in their commerce, kept the lead in their carrying trade, and increased their shipping. Their success was looked upon with envy in England, and with hatred by the King, so that Cromwell's Navigation Act was adopted.”

Broad assertions, such as those above quoted, ought not, in common decency, to have been hazarded without being accompanied by the authority on which they were founded. I know not whether “ the Anatomist” ever saw the books from which I am about to furnish extracts, but if he ever had seen them, I think he could hardly have had the temerity to make such statements.

Sir Francis Brewster, who published, in 1694, a volume, entitled, “ Essays on Trade and Navigation,” thus details the circumstances so summarily comprised by Mr. Ricardo in six lines:—

“ When this Act was first thought on, in the time of the Rump Parliament, thus as I find it by Story, and relation of some that were merchants and commanders at sea in that time, the Rump Parliament quarrelling with the Dutch, took the opportunity of making trade the chiefest pretence for it, believing that would be popular, and affect England; and the truth is, there was ground enough for quarrel in matters of trade. The Dutch grew very fast upon us all the reign of Charles I.; and it is a mistake to say that we lost our trade into the Sound and Muscovy since the Act of Navigation, for it was stealing from us the year 1634, and was in a manner quite lost by the year 1652. But that which most affected and

gave offence to the nation, was, the Dutch had got such a trade to our plantations in the West Indies, that we could scarce get so much sugars home as the nation consumed. They supplied our plantations with wines, brandies, linen, and almost everything they spent [used] in the islands. This being so notorious, the then Government thought upon the Act of Navigation, which had the good effect in preserving that part of our trade and navigation that was left, *and perhaps ne o're at this day the preservation of these kingdoms to it*; for that upon the restoration of Charles II., had not this Act lain in the way, there might not have been such course taken as there was in our trade and navigation.

“ Upon the restoration of Charles II., there was a set of people in trade that had been bred up in it in the time of the Parliament, and these men, having the money as well as the trade of the kingdom in their hands, were at that time easier heard than they have been since. They, not knowing what force foreign money might have at court, thought themselves never safe until they got the Act of Navigation confirmed, and being early in their application, they succeeded to their own satisfaction, with some advantages more than was in the former Act. For it is to be observed that, under Oliver's Government, the Act of Navigation had little force; both the Government and the merchants were willing to let it sleep; for that during the war with Spain, to avoid their privateers, which were so numerous that scarce a ship could stir without a convoy, most of our trade was managed in Dutch bottoms, they being at peace with Spain. This management had almost stifled the Act of Navigation; and merchants, finding *their present gain by the cheapness of Dutch sailing, did not consider the future consequence: immediate gain was what they minded.* But, upon the Restoration, the same men that, under the usurped Government, were content with the general scramble, and to come in for a share, were now for securing trade to posterity, which they were careless of whilst they had no foundation of law or Government. I have been the larger in this account, because I find it generally believed that this Act of Navigation was originally brought forth in prejudice to the Dutch, and for the same reason renewed in the reign of Charles II., *whereas in truth it was at first made with much reason and necessity.*”

A very carefully-written volume, printed in 1727, entitled, “*Columna Rostrata*,” being a critical history of the English “sea affairs,” compiled “from original pieces, or from the “testimonies of the best foreign historians, by Samuel “Colliber,” contains the following passages, from which

the reader may be able to arrive at the fact, that war with the Dutch would in all probability have occurred, had we continued to insist upon claiming our national rights, whether the Navigation Act had been passed or not:—

“ The late successes of the Hollanders against the Spaniards and Dunkirkers had, it seems, so raised their courage, that they were forward enough to try their strength with the English, whom they regarded as their chief competitors in point of trade. But because what the English had done in granting letters of mart, and in passing the Act of Navigation, was no other than what all other nations have a right to do; therefore they could not with so good a grace proceed to hostilities, upon those accounts. They therefore chose rather to begin the war by refusing to strike the flag, or acknowledge the English dominion of the seas, which method, they thought, could not but appear very plausible, it being, as they pretended, the resisting a tyranny which other nations were equally concerned to oppose. * * * * The whale, herring, and cod fisheries, joined with the commerce of almost the whole world, had rendered the Dutch the most powerful nation at sea that, perhaps, the world ever saw. The number of their fishing and trading vessels is computed to have exceeded that of all other nations in Europe. Their people were well exercised, and animated by their successes in the Spanish war, which had been but lately finished by an advantageous peace; and the vast confluence of sea-faring men from all the northern ports, drawn by the fame of their commerce, furnished them, without pressing, with such numbers of able sailors as could not easily be exhausted by a long war; so that to wage war with them was in some respect to war against a great part of Europe.”

Mr. Carlyle, who has lately given to the world “ Oliver Cromwell's Letters and Speeches,” accompanied by remarks striking of the quaint style of the period, writes as follows:

“ July 9, 1652. A great external fact, which no doubt has its effect on all internal movements, is the war with the Dutch. The Dutch, ever since our death warrant to Charles First, have looked askance at this new Commonwealth, which wished to stand well with them, and have accumulated offence on offence against it. Ambassadour Dorishaus was assassinated in their country; Charles Second was entertained there; evasive slow answers were given to tough St. John, who went over as new Ambassadour, to which St. John, responding with great directness in a proud, brief, and very emphatic manner, took his leave

and came home again. Came home again; and passed the celebrated Navigation Act, [introduced 5th August, 1651; passed 9th October, 1651,] forbidding that any goods should be imported into England, except either in English ships or in ships of the country where the goods were produced. Thereby terribly maiming the carrying trade of the Dutch, and indeed, as the issue proved, depressing the Dutch maritime interest not a little, and proportionally elevating that of England. Embassies in consequence from their irritated high mightinesses; sea fightings in consequence; and much negotiating, apologising, and bickering, mounting ever higher; which at length, at the date above given, issues in declared war. Dutch war: cannonadings and fierce sea fights in the narrow seas; land soldiers drafted to fight on ship-board, and land officers, Blake, Dean, Monk, who became a thrice famous one;—poor Dean lost his life in this business. They doggedly beat the Dutch, and again beat them: their best Van Tromps and De Ruyters could not stand these terrible Puritan sailors and gunners. The Dutch gradually grew tame*."

The favourable termination in 1653 of the first Dutch war was such as, from the serious odds under which it was commenced, the most sanguine could scarcely have anticipated. For a time victory appeared disposed to incline to the side of the Dutch; and but for the absurd vaunt of Tromp, in arrogating a conquest he had not fully achieved, it may be doubted whether England would have obtained ultimately the advantages she did. All must be familiar with the historical fact, that Tromp, after compelling a division of the English fleet to retreat, hoisted a broom at his mast head, indicating his intention "to sweep the narrow seas." That this circumstance aroused the dormant spirit of every Englishman, may be easily believed. Although cant-ridden to a considerable extent, there was never manifested at any period of our history more sterling and indomitable courage. Fanatics though they were, they mingled with their enthusiasm a degree of military ardour which bore done all before it. On the field, or on the narrow seas, the same earnestness was visible, and that doggedness which shrank not at tolerating an enormous crime, when committed, as

* Carlyle, vol. ii., p. 366.

they believed, for the support of their independence, was not likely to brook the boast of a foreign rival. Martin Harpetz Tromp paid the forfeit of his temerity with his life. In the action which terminated the mortal career of that renowned admiral, it is stated that the killed, wounded, and prisoners in the Dutch fleet amounted to 6200 officers and men. Tromp fell mortally wounded by a musket-ball, during the heat of the engagement; and, having lost the most talented of their admirals, in addition to having been soundly beaten, the Dutch were glad to conclude a peace in which all that was demanded was conceded. Let those who are so disposed give vent to mawkish sensibility, decry the horrors of war, and tell us how much better our time *might* have been employed; but thus much cannot be gainsaid, that the first Dutch war determined the cause, **MARE LIBERUM versus MARE CLAUSUM**, in a manner the most propitious to the future destinies of England.

CHAPTER III.

THE ACT OF NAVIGATION.

ONE of the first proceedings of Charles II. after the Restoration, was that of confirming the principle of Cromwell's Navigation Act, and of grafting thereon many important additions. What those laws were, and the intermediate changes down to the present time, will be found in another part of this volume*. Opponents to the Navigation Laws object that the protective principle did not succeed—that “the maritime charter foundered at sea,” and that it is only by some particular kind of “shipowner's logic,” that it can be proved the Navigation Act ever did anything towards advancing the trade and prosperity of England, but that, on the contrary, it was only productive of mischief. Had our ancestral legislators foreseen the Repeal movement which has lately taken place, and kindly suspended the Navigation Laws half a century, say from 1700 till 1750, Mr. Ricardo might have had some ground for his argument, that is, supposing, at the expiration of that period, England's prosperity had largely increased. But to attempt to base a theory upon supposititious materials thinner than air, is worthy only of a “Free-Trader's logic.” The only authorities cited to prove that the Navigation Act did not succeed, are Sir Josiah Child and Sir William Berkeley; the former of whom wrote a treatise upon trade in 1669,

* Appendix, C.

printed in 1692; and the latter was Governor of Virginia. Mr. Stafford Northcote, Legal Assistant to the Board of Trade, stated in his evidence (4776) before the Committee of the House of Lords, that "Sir Josiah Child, who wrote "thirty years afterwards, shows that the Dutch were still in "possession of very considerable commerce;" from which the credulous reader would infer that Sir Josiah Child was, to a certain extent, a witness against the Navigation Laws. It would, therefore, have been a more ingenuous course, had Mr. Stafford Northcote favoured the Committee with an extract from Sir Josiah Child's work, in the same manner as he supplied a passage from the letter of Sir William Berkeley. Mr. Ricardo also cites observations contained in Sir Josiah's book, but with an obvious intention to favour his own preconceived notions, rather than to give to that author the justice which was due to him. Since so much only has been said, written, and darkly hinted of Sir Josiah Child, (re-christened, by Mr. Ricardo, "Sir Joshua "Child, the then champion of the Navigation Laws,") as suited a party purpose, I think it will be but fair to let that author's opinions be made known.

"CONCERNING THE ACT OF NAVIGATION."

"Though this Act be by most concluded a very beneficial Act for this kingdom, especially by the masters and owners of shipping, and by all seamen, yet some there are, both wise and honest gentlemen and merchants, that doubt whether the inconveniences it hath brought with it, be not greater than the conveniences. For my own part, I am of opinion that, in relation to trade, shipping, profit, and power, it is one of the choicest and most prudent Acts that ever was made in England, and *without which, we had not now been owners of one-half the shipping nor trade, nor employed one-half the seamen which we do at present*; but seeing time hath discovered some defects, which, in my poor opinion, do admit of an easie amendment, and seeing that the whole Act is not approved by unanimous consent, I thought fit to discourse a little concerning it, wherein after a plain method I shall lay down such objections as I have met with, and subjoin my answers, with such reasons as occur to my memory, in confirmation of my own opinion.

"The objections against the whole Act are such as these.

Objection 1. Some have told me that I on all occasions magnifie the Dutch policy in relation to their trade, and the Dutch have no Act of Navigation, and therefore they are certainly not always in the right as to the understanding of their true interest in trade, or else we are wrong in this.

“ I answer, I am yet to be informed where the Dutch have missed their proper interest in trade; *but that which is fit for one nation to do, in relation to their trade, is not fit for all*, no more than the same policy is necessary to a prevailing army that are masters of the field, as to an army of less force to be able to encounter their enemies at all times and places.

“ *Objection 2.* The second objection to the whole Act is, some will confess that as to the merchants and owners of ships the Act of Navigation is eminently beneficial; but say that merchants and owners are but an inconsiderable number of men in respect of the whole nation, and that it would be to the interest of the greater number, that our native commodities and manufactures should be taken from us at the best rates, and foreign commodities sold us at the cheapest, *with admission of Dutch merchants and shipping in common with the English*. My answer is, that I cannot deny but this may be true, if the present profit of the generality be barely and singly considered; but this kingdom being an island, the defence whereof hath always been our shipping and seamen, *it seems to me absolutely necessary that PROFIT AND POWER OUGHT JOINTLY TO BE CONSIDERED*; and if so, I think none can deny but the Act of Navigation hath and doth occasion building and employing *three times the number of ships and seamen that otherwise we should or would do*; and that consequently *if our force at sea were so greatly impaired, it would expose us to the receiving of all kinds of injuries and affronts from our neighbours, and, in conclusion, render us A DESPICABLE AND MISERABLE PEOPLE.*”

So much upon the general question; and it is possible that the reader will now discover why Mr. Stafford Northcote abstained from giving the Committee an extract from Sir Josiah Child's book, and why Mr. Ricardo gave only the objections, or admissions, and drawbacks, without stating the answers to the two former, or the proposed remedies for the latter. This one-sided mode of dealing with the maritime interests of the country has been but too generally practised. “ Returns” can be procured to suit any particular theory, and garbled extracts easily manufactured

to square with the most extravagant notions. To this principle of action may be attributed the adoption of those laws to which the reader's attention will be requested hereafter, named "Reciprocity Laws," but which have hitherto only benefited the foreigner at the expense of the British shipowner, and, ultimately, the British public. Mr. Stafford Northcote, because it suited the Board of Trade view, quoted Sir William Berkeley's opinion, in reply to question 4777.

"I have made a note of a representation by Sir William Berkeley, the Governor of Virginia in the year 1671:— 'Mighty and destructive have been the obstructions to our trade and navigation by that severe Act of Parliament which excludes us from having any commerce with any nation in Europe but our own. So that we cannot add to our plantation any commodity that grows out of it, as olive trees, cotton, or vines. Besides this, we cannot procure any skilful men for our own hopeful commodity of silk, and it is not lawful for us to carry a pipe-stave or a bushel of corn to any place in Europe out of the King's dominions. If this were for the good of His Majesty's service, or the good of the subject, we should not repine, whatever were our suffering; but, on my soul, it is the contrary for both, and this is the cause why no small or great vessels are built here; for we are most obedient to all laws, whilst the New England men break through them, and trade to any place that their interests leads them to.' "

Sir Josiah Child had, it would seem, heard of similar complaints, and he met them in so forcible a manner, that it would be well his remarks thereupon should be placed in juxtaposition with the passage contained in Sir William Berkeley's letter:—

"The inhabitants and planters of our plantations in America say, this Act will in time ruin their plantations, if they may not be permitted at least to carry their sugars to the best markets, and not be compelled to send all to, and receive all commodities from, England. I answer, if they were not kept to the rules of the Act of Navigation, the consequence would be, that in a few years the benefit of them would be wholly lost to the nation. It being agreeable to the policy of the Dutch, Danes, French, Spaniards, Portugals, and all nations in the world, to keep their external provinces and colonies in a subjection unto,

and dependency upon, their mother kingdom; and if they should not do so, the Dutch, would carry away the greatest of advantage by the plantations of all the Princes in Christendom, leaving us and others only the trouble of breeding men and sending them abroad to cultivate the ground, and have bread for their industry."

No less sound are Sir Josiah Child's remarks upon the East country trade. The present position of that trade, now that reciprocity laws have been at work, and have undone all the good which the restrictions upon the trade, passed subsequently to the Navigation Act*, effected, is very like what it was in Sir Josiah's day."

" The second objection to part of the Act of Navigation is usually made by the Eastland and Norway merchants, who affirm that in effect their trade is much declined since the passing of the Act of Navigation, and the Danes, Swedes, Holsteners, and all Easterlings, who by the said Act may import timber and other Eastern commodities, have increased in the number of their shipping employed in this trade since our Act of Navigation at least *two third parts*; and the English have proportionably declined in the number of theirs employed in that trade. I answer, that I believe the matter of fact asserted is true, as well as the cause assigned, *viz.*, the Act of Navigation†. And yet this should not make us out of love with that excellent law; rather let it put us upon contriving the amendment of this seeming defect or inconvenience, the cure whereof, I hope, upon mature consideration, will not be found difficult, for which I humbly propound to the wisdom of Parliament; *viz.*, that a law be made to impose a custom of at least 30 or 25 *per cent.* on all Eastland commodities—timber, boards, &c., imported into England and Ireland in any but English-built ships; or at least such only as are sailed with an English master, and at least three-fourths English mariners. And for these reasons:—*Reason first.* If this be not done, the Danes, Swedes, and Easterlings will certainly, in a few years, carry the whole trade, *by reason of the difference of the charge of building a ship fit for that trade there and here*: *viz.*, a

* Appendix, C. The 13 & 14 Car. II., c. 11, s. 23, prohibited the introduction of pitch, tar, rosin, deal boards, timber, spicery, grocery, &c., from the Netherlands or Germany, *in any sort of ship whatever*; but this was partially relaxed by 6 Geo. I., c. 15, in favour of British ships.

+ See Sir F. Brewster's opinion at p. 20, *ante*, which gives another reason for this fact.

flyboat of 300 tons, new built, and set to sea for such a voyage may cost there £.1300 or £.1400, which here would cost from £.2200 to £.2400, which is so vast a disproportion, that it is impossible for an Englishman to cope with a Dane in that navigation under such a discouragement; to balance which there is nothing but the 'stranger's duty' which the Dane now pays, which may come to £.5 or £.6 per ship per voyage, at most, one with another, which is incompatible with the difference of price between the first cost of the ships of either nation. And this is so evident to those who are conversant in those trades, that besides the decrease of our shipping, and increase of theirs, that hath already happened, ours in probability had been wholly beaten out of the trade, and only Danes and Easterlings freighted, had we been necessitated to build English ships, and had not been recruited on moderate prices by fly-boats (being proper for this trade) taken in the late Dutch war. **Reason 2.** Because the number of strangers' ships employed in the aforesaid trade yearly I estimate to be about 200 sail; which, if such a law was made, must unavoidably be all excluded, and the employment fall wholly into English hands; which would be an excellent nursery, and give constant maintenance to a number of brave English seamen, more than we can or do employ at present. **Reason 3.** The Act of Navigation is now of seventeen or eighteen years' standing in England, and yet in all these years very few, if any, English ships have been built for this trade; and it seems to me in vain to expect that ever this law will procure the building of one English ship fit for that employment, till those strangers are excluded this trade for England,—and much more improbable it is that any should now be built, than it was formerly when the Act was first made, because timber is now at almost double the price in England it was then."

The concluding observation is well worthy the attention of the Legislature at this juncture. It has been asserted as a reason for admitting foreigners to a full participation in the trade, that we should have commodities cheaper. It does not appear to have had that effect under Charles II.'s Act; and, if we refer to the evidence of responsible witnesses which will hereafter be cited, all the restrictions removed up to the present time have not benefited the consumer. Sir Josiah Child carries his argument still farther, and his observations respecting freights paid to English seamen, and to foreigners, are also very important,

when debating the propriety of diverting the carrying trade into foreign channels, as are also his observations in anticipation of retaliation. The objections made to his proposition for levying a protective duty upon commodities imported by foreign ships, he states and answers thus:—

“ *Objection 1.* If such an imposition be laid on those gross commodities imported by strangers’ ships, that will amount to the excluding all strangers from this trade, we shall want ships in England to carry on the trade, and so the commodity will not be had, or else will come very dear to us. I answer, if the commodity should be somewhat dearer for the present, it would be no less to the nation in general, because all freight would be paid to Englishmen, *whereas the freight paid to strangers* (which upon those commodities is commonly as much or more than the value of the goods), *is all clear loss to the nation.* *Secondly,* If there should be a present want of shipping, and the Parliament shall please to enjoyn us to build English ships for this trade, this extraordinary good effect will follow, *viz.*, it will engage us to do that we never yet did—fall to building of fly-boats (great ships of burthen, but of no force, and small charge in sailing), which would be the most profitable undertaking that ever Englishmen were engaged in*, and that which is absolutely necessary to be done if ever we intend to board the Dutch in their trade and navigation; these fly-boats being the milch cows of Holland, from which they have sucked manifoldly greater profit than from all their ships of force, though both, I know, are necessary. But if at first the Parliament shall think fit to enjoyn us only to ships sailed with an English master and three-fourths English mariners, the Danes and Easterlings being by this means put out of so great an employment for this shipping, we shall buy ships proper for this trade on easie terms of them, perhaps for half their cost, which undervalue in purchase will be a present clear profit to England.”

Sir Josiah Child proceeds with his argument, meeting every objection that had been or could be raised against the Act of Navigation. In particular, he unhesitatingly repudiates the notions entertained by some as to the dangers liable to result from retaliation. The foregoing, however,

* We may gather from this remark that it was previously the custom to build ships for the double purpose of fighting and carrying merchandise, which must have added greatly to the expense of building and navigating.

is a fair sample of the whole; and it may serve to enlighten those who would attempt to base the necessity for the repeal of the Navigation Laws upon the threats of the Northern power to retaliate. There are many who, like Sir Josiah Child in his day, would meet retaliation without fear of the consequences, and who entertain the belief, that, should anything happen to repeal the reciprocity treaties now in existence, we shall be able to obtain foreign merchant ships "*on easie terms, perhaps for half their cost.*"

CHAPTER IV.

THE SECOND DUTCH WAR.

ENGLAND, when passing the Navigation Act, may be compared to a nobleman desperately resolved to free his estate from severe embarrassments which his ancestors had entailed upon it. Instead of relying upon those natural resources which are not liable to fail, England had placed herself at the mercy of foreigners. Upon the plea of cheapness, the Dutch had been permitted, directly or indirectly, to obtain an enormous hold upon our commerce, and had thereby absorbed much of that wealth which might, under a different system, have remained at home. Such being the posture of affairs, Charles found himself with ships which he had neither money to fit out nor sailors to man, unless by placing an embargo upon the whole mercantile navy. Trying as the predicament was, there seemed to be no other means by which the country could escape from its enthralment. The struggle was severe, but ultimately its results were all that the most sanguine could have anticipated.

The first Dutch war lasted a year, and although England proved so eminently victorious, yet its immediate effect was a drawback upon commercial pursuits. The honour and glory were ours, but our rivals were still our superiors in

wealth. While this state of things continued, the Dutch were content to pay to England the barren homage of the flag, and seemingly to acknowledge our superiority; but no sooner did our commerce appear to make head, and show a probability of rivalling their own, than their animosity was made apparent. Finding, by the treaty of commerce which Charles had made with Spain, that England had been admitted to a preference in the Spanish trade, and the possession of Jamaica secured, the Dutch engaged their East and West India Companies to throw all the difficulties within their reach in the way of our trade. The Dutch East India Company delayed the liquidation of the damages which the English were to have received under the treaty of commerce entered into with them, and peremptorily refused to deliver up the island of Poleron, in the East Indies, which had been thereby ceded to England. In addition to this, they dictated the terms, and ports, on and at which our ships should trade in India. The Dutch West India Company, on the other hand, took possession of Cape Coast Castle, upon some dispute with the African Company.

Although at one time the professed admirers of *MARE LIBERUM*, the Dutch began to consider that *MARE CLAUSUM* possessed more substantial charms; and having, as they thought, the power, so they determined, if they could not claim or enforce the sovereignty of the "narrow seas," to erect their maritime throne in the Southern hemisphere.

Mr. Pepys, Secretary of the Admiralty, whose "Diary" throws considerable light upon this period of our history, furnishes the following:—

"*Feb. 9, 1664.*—Great talk of the Dutch proclaiming themselves in India lords of the Southern Seas, and denying traffic there to all ships but their own, upon pain of confiscation, which makes our merchants mad. *Feb. 15.*—Great news of the arrival of two rich ships, the *Greyhound* and another, which they were mightily afraid of. This afternoon Sir Thomas Chamberlain came to the office to me and showed

me several letters from the East Indies, showing the height that the Dutch are come to there ; showing scorn to all the English, even in our own factory there of Surat, beating several men, and hanging the English standard, St. George, under the Dutch flag in scorn ; saying that whatever their masters do or say at home, they will do what they list, and be masters of all the world there ; and have so proclaimed themselves **SOVEREIGN OF ALL THE SOUTH SEAS**, which certainly our King cannot endure if the Parliament will give him money. But I doubt (and yet do hope) they will not yet, till we are more ready for it.

“ April 21st.—I find that the House this day has voted that the King be desired to demand right for the wrong done us by the Dutch, and that they will stand by him with their lives and fortunes, which is a very high vote and more than I expected.”

England's first struggle with the Dutch was for national rights—her second, for commercial independence ; and it was only by pursuing a steady, uniform, course that this latter object could be achieved, as well as the former one. The proceedings of the Dutch, with reference to Africa, rendered it necessary to send a squadron thither, under the command of Sir Robert Holmes, in 1661 ; but as that squadron did not succeed in obtaining possession of Cape Coast, a second expedition, under the same commander, proceeded thither in 1663, and effected that and other objects, but was defeated at St. George D'Elmina. These disputes terminated in war ; but it will be seen, by the annexed extract from Pepys, how great were the difficulties with which Charles had to contend, and to what a miserably low ebb our maritime resources had been reduced by permitting the relaxation of the wise restrictions imposed by the Navigation Laws.

“ January 15th, 1664-5.—With Sir William Penn in his coach to my Lord Chancellor's, where, by-and-by, Mr. Coventry, Sir William Penn, Sir John Lawson, Sir George Ascue, and myself were called in to the King, there being several of the Privy Council and my Lord Chancellor lying at length upon a couch (of the gout I suppose), and there Sir William Penn spoke pretty well to dissuade the King from letting the Turkey ships go out, saying, in short, the King having resolved to have 130 ships out by the spring, he must have above twenty of them merchant-men. Towards which he,

in *the whole river, could find but twelve or fourteen*, and of them the five ships taken up by the merchants were a part, and so could not be spared. That we should need 30,000 sailors to man these 130 ships ; and of them in service we have not above 16,000, so that we shall need 14,000 more. That these ships with their convoys carry about 2,000 men ; and those the best men that could be got, it being the men used to the southward that are the best men for war, though those bred in the North, among the colliers, are good for labour. That it will not be safe for the merchants, nor honourable for the King, to expose these rich ships, with his convoy of six ships, to go, it not being enough to secure them against the Dutch, who, without doubt, will have a great fleet in the Straits. This Sir John Lawson enlarged upon. Sir George Ascue chiefly spoke, that *war and trade could not be supported together*. Mr. Coventry showed how the medium of the men the King hath, one year with another, employed in his navy, since his coming, hath not been above 3,000 men, or at most 4,000 ; and now having occasion of 30,000, the remaining 26,000 *must be found out of the trade of the nation*. All ended with a conviction that it was not fit for them to go out, though the ships be loaded."

An officer of the British navy told the Parliamentary Committees appointed to investigate the policy and operation of the Navigation Laws, that the navy was independent of the merchant-service for a supply of sailors. Mr. Ricardo darted upon the equivocal expression with the eagerness of a starving man catching at a bone, and, having secured the prize, triumphantly exclaimed, " There is an end, " therefore, in all its branches, of the Nursery question !" The opinion at the early period to which I allude, was different, and the result of the course pursued will be shown hereafter. A fleet was fitted out, the magnitude of which was considerable. It consisted of 110 sail, carrying 23,000 men, and armed with 4,500 guns. The Dutch fleet was superior in most particulars, and a series of hotly contested actions ensued. The war was carried on with the utmost vigour, and with variable results, for two years ; and, in 1667, while a treaty of peace was negotiating, due care not having been taken to keep a naval force available, the attack upon the ships in the Medway took place. Surely,

if history is of any use, we may draw from the portion of it to which I have referred a most impressive lesson, that England, to be exempt from foreign insult and imposition, must have no corrival on the ocean. It proves to us that for this purpose a large reserve of sailors is imperatively necessary ; and further shows that, unless those sailors can find eligible employment in the mercantile marine of their own country, it is an actual impossibility that such a resource can be available in a time of need. It may, moreover, be gathered from the events of the past that, unless England ensures general freedom of commerce, other powers will league together to destroy it. England has long been famed as the great bulwark of liberty, in its truest sense, and of every other blessing ; but if the means of enforcing her authority were withdrawn, it would be seen that her high character for strict and impartial justice would do little even to ensure her own immunity from insult. And as well might we expect a ship to fight a good action without guns, or other offensive or defensive weapons, as England to hold her high place among nations when deprived of the main-spring of her power—her navy. Arguing from the past, if our navy (of which the merchant-service is essentially a component part) were insufficient, and we attempted to defend ourselves from the insolence of other powers, we should again feel the force of Sir George Ascue's observation, that "*war and trade cannot both be supported.*" The interests of ships, colonies, and commerce have, by all sound statesmen, been heretofore considered indivisible ; let not, therefore, what the "*wisdom of our ancestors*" joined together be lightly put asunder by crazy theorists.

CHAPTER V.

FURTHER EFFECTS OF THE NAVIGATION LAWS.

As the Navigation Laws have been made chargeable with all the evils under which commerce for a time languished, and as no allowance has been made for war, the plague, or the great fire, and other untoward circumstances, I think it very important to endeavour to explain away the alleged complaints, by directing attention to the peculiar state of the times.

The terms of the peace concluded with the Dutch in 1667 were not such as to give rise to any exultation on the part of England. To say they were safe and honourable is to speak the whole truth; for the island of Poleron, which had been a bone of contention, was given up to the Dutch, and our gains consisted only in some islands in the West Indies. But there can be no doubt the peace was unwillingly made upon such terms. Derangements in his domestic affairs, and much discontent among the people, who still smarted under the recollection of the insult and injury at Chatham, induced Charles to listen to the terms proposed. In addition to which, the proceedings of France with regard to the Netherlands were such as to occasion much concern. The hollowness of the peace, however, by which our East India commerce was greatly curtailed, if not wholly restricted, added to the influence of a body well known in

history as “the Cabal,” rendered it of short duration; and war was again declared in March 1672.

There were many circumstances connected with the declaration of this war which bore the impress of injustice and oppression. In the two former wars justice had been wholly on our side: we fought only for our rights and liberties; but, on the third occasion, the war was chiefly instigated by French machinations, aided and abetted by the unprincipled ministry by which Charles was surrounded, and by whose baleful influence he was governed. In this war the French were in alliance; but the united power of the two nations was for a time unable to make any considerable impression upon the fleets of Holland. The resources of the Dutch were so great, that the disasters they sustained were readily repaired; and it was only by the stoppage of their trade that they were ultimately subdued. A treaty of peace was at length, after two years of war, concluded, the terms of which were of the utmost moment. Campbell thus sums up the results of the Dutch wars:—

“ This treaty of peace was signed at London February 9th, 1674; and thereby those differences were all adjusted which had so often and so long disturbed both States. In the first place, the business of the flag was regulated according to the king’s sense of his rights, which the States till now would never admit. In their treaty with Cromwell they did indeed stipulate that their ships should salute the English; but then this was expressed in such loose terms, as afforded the Dutch room to suggest that the doing of it was no more than a point of civility; but now the thing was put out of all dispute, and what was before styled courtesy was here confessed to be a right. The East India trade was likewise settled, so as to prevent subsequent debates, and not to leave either party at liberty to encroach on the other.”

When summing up the proceedings of Charles’s reign, with reference to trade, Campbell says:—

“ Yet, upon the whole, I am fully persuaded that, during his whole reign we were great gainers thereby; and this, I think, I can make clearly appear. In the first place, the former [second] Dutch war was most certainly undertaken for the sake

of trade ; nor can it be conceived that in the second [third *] the Dutch would have pushed as they did from any other motive than an apprehension that from rivals we should become their superiors in commerce ; to which, from the very genius of their state, they could not patiently submit. In the next place, let us consider the weighty losses sustained in the space of fifteen years by the plague, the fire of London, and the two Dutch wars. They have been computed [by Sir William Petty] at little less than twenty-seven millions. But supposing them to have amounted only to twenty millions, the nation must have been reduced to the lowest ebb of poverty and distress, if she had not been relieved by the vast profits of her foreign trade. This it was that repaired the loss of our people in a surprising manner, raised the city of London like a *Phœnix*, brighter and more beautiful for having been in flames, and increased our shipping to double what it was at the time of the King's coming in. These are facts agreed on by the greatest men that ever handled subjects of this nature, grounded on such evidence as could not deceive them, and justified by effects which even posterity may contemplate, and from thence discern the wisdom and truth of their computations. The East India Company were exceedingly favoured and protected, especially in the beginning of this reign ; the African Company was in the zenith of its glory, and brought in vast profits to the proprietors and the nation. Many of our plantations were settled by his Majesty's favour, such as Pennsylvania, Carolina, &c. Others were restored to this nation by his arms—such as New York and the Jerseys ;—and all had such encouragement, that they made quite another figure than in former times, as we may guess from what a modern writer, no way partial to this prince, says of Barbadoes : that during his reign it maintained 400 sail of ships, produced £200,000 a year clear profit to this nation, and maintained 100,000 people here and there. These are high calculations ; but I believe the person who made them is able to justify them ; and therefore I make no question that Sir William Petty was in the right when he calculated our exports at ten millions per annum. This agrees very well with the state of our customs, which fell then little short of a million, though in 1660 they were farmed for £400,000, as they were once let by Queen Elizabeth at £30,000. Dr. Davenant, an excellent judge in these matters, having duly weighed all the calculations I have mentioned, and compared them with all the lights he had received from long experience, pronounces the balance of

* At page 183, vol. ii. Campbell says,—“ We are now come to the *third* Dutch war, more frequently called the *second*, because it was so in respect to this reign,” &c., which accounts for the expressions I have corrected in brackets.

trade to have been in our favour in this reign two millions a year; and less, I think, it could not well be."

The intermediate changes in the Navigation Laws are briefly comprised in the paper presented to the House of Commons by Mr. Lefevre, and which the reader will find in the Appendix*; but the preamble of an Act, passed by James II. in the year 1685, contains some admissions which it would be well to examine. Mr. Lefevre, in the paper alluded to, simply mentions the fact that, by the Act 1 James II., c. 18, an extra duty of five shillings per ton, for every voyage, was laid upon all foreign-built ships engaged in the coasting trade, which, by the Navigation Laws previously in force, was available to ships built in any country. The Act of James II. here referred to, is intituled " An Act " to encourage the building of ships in England;" and the assertions in the preamble serve to show the consequence, in that day, of giving encouragement to foreign shipping, which was then, as indeed it must always be, very prejudicial to our own:—

" WHEREAS for some years past, and, more especially, since the laying a duty upon coals brought into the river Thames, there has been observed a more than ordinary decay in building ships in England, and particularly in Newcastle, Hull, Yarmouth, Ipswich, Aldborough, Dunwich, Walderswick, Woodbridge, and Harwich, where many stout ships were yearly built for the coal and other trade, which were of great use to His Majesty in time of war, and a nursery for able seamen, but by the discouragement that trade hath ever since lain under, occasioned chiefly by the freedom which foreign ships and vessels bought and brought into this kingdom have enjoyed, in the coal and other inland trade, equal to that of English-built ships, the merchants, owners, and others have not been able to build as formerly, which hath caused many of our English shipwrights, caulkers, and seamen to seek their employments abroad; whereby the building trade is not only wholly lost in several of the aforementioned places, and in others very much decayed, but also the importation of timber, plank, hemp, pitch, tar, iron, masts, canvas, and other commodities used in building and fitting out ships, is greatly lessened, to the apparent prejudice of His Majesty's customs, the loss of a considerable employment for

* Appendix, C.

shipping, and, consequently, of all other trades depending there-upon, to the too great advantage of foreign nations," &c.

It was then enacted, that all foreign-built ships thereafter brought or bought to be employed in the coasting trade should pay five shillings per ton for every voyage, in addition to other customary duties ; but that those ships already so employed should pay only an additional shilling per ton : one moiety of such additional duties to be paid to the Chest at Chatham, and the other to the Trinity House at Deptford.

The object of these enactments was most praiseworthy, and there can be no doubt that it had the desired effect. Five shillings per ton additional for every voyage must have been tantamount to a prohibition ; and even the additional shilling must have been sufficient to cause the withdrawal of all foreign-built vessels at the first opportunity.

In the meanwhile the naval power of France had, by rapid strides, attained a considerable height, but apparently for martial, rather than for commercial, aggrandisement. Depressed by the latter spirit as England had been, it was not without a severe struggle she was able to counteract the rising force of France. The marine of Holland, also, "scotched," but not "killed," was still vastly superior to us in number. In the year 1687 it is computed, that while belonging to England there were not more than 40,000 seamen, the navy of France could command 60,000, and Holland double that number. Remembering in what way the French manufactured sailors in the late war, this statement is not surprising, inasmuch as it relates to that nation. Conscription—a fearful mode of impressment—drew men together in any number half a century ago ; and it is very probable that a like sweeping mode of procuring men enabled the French Minister to state as a fact that which admits of very serious question, if we are to understand that he meant *seamen*.

In 1690 England was again involved in war; and although joined by the Dutch, the French, chiefly by the superior build and armament of their ships, were enabled to gain a considerable advantage over their united antagonists, perhaps equal to a victory. Without stopping to inquire into the causes of our reverses, which are foreign to the object of this volume, it may be stated that the tables were not long in being turned; and that in 1692 the French fleet was engaged off Cape Barfleur and dispersed, and that a division of the fleet was burnt in the harbour of La Hogue, by the gallant Rooke. It is, however, quite within our province to consider the means by which the fleet of England was manned. The fleet fitted out in 1692 had, it is reported, 27,725 men, of whom at least 20,000 must have been seamen. Fifteen years of peace, had there been no mercantile navy in which to employ the men, would have left us wholly at the mercy of the French, or any other hostile nation; but, having that reserve, we were enabled to find men when we wanted them—and such men, too, as could, in an incredibly short space of time, subdue an imperious and far from despicable foe. But, meanwhile, our commerce suffered severely in detail. French squadrons and innumerable privateers, commanded by enterprising officers, committed desperate ravages upon convoys of merchant-ships, and rendered peace a blessing which was ardently sought after. It can be hardly necessary to pursue this subject farther at present, especially as it is intended to say something hereafter with reference to manning the navy. It cannot reasonably be doubted that during each subsequent war royal fleets could not have put to sea, much less could they have gained victories over enemies in every respect, save that of personal hardihood and seaman-like acquirements, fully their equals, had they not had a mercantile navy to fall back upon.

CHAPTER VI.

THE NAVIGATION LAWS AS THEY ARE.

THE intermediate changes of the Navigation Law are thus laid down by Mr. Stafford Northcote, Legal Assistant to the Board of Trade, in his evidence before the Select Committee of the House of Lords :—

“ The following were the general provisions of the Navigation Law at the time of its greatest stringency :—No produce of Europe could be imported into any of our plantations, except from England or Wales ; even Irish or Scotch produce, generally speaking, could not be imported from Ireland or Scotland. None of the principal productions of the plantations could be exported except to England or Wales, or (on paying a duty) to some other English plantation. They could not go to Scotland or Ireland. Nothing could be imported into, or exported from, a plantation, except in an English ship. No produce of any part of the world could be imported into this country, except directly from the country of its origin, or from the usual place of shipment. No produce of Asia, Africa, or America, could be imported, except in British ships. No produce of Russia or of Turkey, nor any of the articles (about twenty) enumerated in the Act of Navigation, could be imported from Europe, except either in British ships, or in ships of the country of which the goods were the produce, or from which they were usually first exported. No sort of wines other than Rhenish, no sort of spicery, grocery, tobacco, potashes, pitch, tar, salt, rosin, deal boards, fir timber, or olive oil, could be imported from the Netherlands or Germany in any ship or vessel whatsoever. I should say the increase of our colonies caused a great increase in our trade, and also in the employment of our shipping ; the direction in which our shipping expanded at that time being in the trade with the colonies. Our colonial system undoubtedly secured to British ships the whole of the expansion that was then taking place. Scotland was admitted to share in

the plantation-trade at the Union ; and Ireland in 1780. The Free Port Act was passed in 1766. All trade between our plantations and foreign countries was then strictly prohibited ; but a very lucrative illicit commerce was carried on between them and the Spanish plantations. In 1764, the Government of the day strictly enforced the Navigation Laws in our colonies ; and the exports to Jamaica fell off by £168,000 in one or two years in consequence. The result was, that certain ports in Jamaica and Dominica were opened to foreign vessels coming from the foreign West Indies. This rule has continued down to the present time, and is the origin of the present system of free ports, which has become general in all our colonies.

“ The effect of American independence seemed completely to break up our Navigation system. Before that period there was a constant communication carried on between the colonies which subsequently became the United States and our other colonies, which was very advantageous to both. When American independence was declared, and the United States became a foreign country, that intercourse ceased, and our West Indian colonies suffered very materially. It was, therefore, found absolutely necessary to modify the law relating to them, and, also, as to the trade between this country and Asia, Africa, and America. Immediately on the declaration of independence, Mr. Pitt proposed and brought in a bill, authorising a free and entire intercourse between the United States and the British Dominions. That bill was lost by the Ministry of the day going out upon another question, and it was not brought forward again ; but an Act was passed, enabling the King, by an order in council, to regulate the trade between the United States and all the British Dominions. This was a temporary Act, which was renewed from time to time, and orders in council were issued, regulating the trade between the United States and the colonies, and also between the United States and this country, by which the trade with the colonies was so arranged, that only certain enumerated articles were allowed to be imported into our West Indies from the United States, being the produce of the United States, and those only in British and not in American vessels. In 1794, a treaty was concluded between this country and the United States, containing a stipulation that American vessels, not exceeding 70 tons, should be allowed to trade with our plantations, subject to a condition, that no articles of the produce of our plantations, nor any sugar, molasses, or two or three other articles mentioned in the treaty, should be exported in American vessels, even from the United States, to any part of the world, except the British Dominions ; but I cannot find that any effect was ever given to that provision by any subsequent Act. That treaty expired, I think, in an early year of this century. The Act which provided that a differential tonnage-duty should be laid upon American vessels here, to countervail

the tonnage-duty laid upon British vessels there, was renewed for some little time. Subsequently to the war with America, in this century, another treaty was concluded, I think in 1815, reviving the old stipulations; and vessels of the United States and of this country were allowed to import goods from the United States into this country. In 1817, the Americans passed a Navigation Law of their own. It is a very short Act, providing that no goods shall be imported from any foreign countries into the United States, except in United States vessels, or in the vessels of the country of which the goods are the produce, and from which they are exported, provided that it shall not apply to any country which has not adopted, and shall not adopt, a similar regulation against the United States. Previously to that they had differential duties. One of the first Acts of Congress imposed a duty of six cents a ton upon American vessels, being the property of Americans, and also American built; that thirty cents should be laid upon ships being the property of foreigners, but built in the United States; and fifty cents upon foreign vessels; and also levied a tariff upon all imports into the United States; containing a clause, that if they were imported in American vessels, ten per cent. should be remitted. The following is the footing upon which the United States are now placed with regard to our colonies other than British India:—American vessels were formerly unable to trade with any of our West Indian possessions, except to Turk's Island for salt. They were admitted, in 1822, to bring the produce of the United States into the free ports of our West Indian colonies; but they complained that they were not put upon an equal footing with British ships, and in turn prohibited British ships from coming from the West Indies to the United States. We, then, prohibited the United States ships from going from the United States to the West Indies. Ultimately negotiations took place, and, in 1830, the restrictions were taken off, and the trade was placed on its present understanding, that United States vessels may import into the colonies from the United States any produce of the United States, and British vessels, in the same way, import the produce of the British colonies into the United States. There is a perfect reciprocity between the two countries.

“ The independence of the Portuguese and Spanish colonies had a very considerable effect upon our law in regard to Navigation. The old Navigation Law confined the trade from Asia, Africa, and America, to this country absolutely to British vessels; but a provision also was made for admitting Spanish and Portuguese colonial produce through their respective mother-countries. When the Spanish and Portuguese colonies became independent, it was obviously not natural that we should any longer admit their produce through their mother-countries; and, on the other hand, there was a strong claim that their

ships should be allowed to bring it as well as ours in the same way as the United States were allowed. With regard to the colonies captured during the war, a special rule was made. When the Cape fell into our possession, an Act was passed, giving the King power, by an order in council, to make such regulations, notwithstanding the Navigation Act, as he might please; and I believe ships of all countries in amity with us were admitted at the Cape. The most important modifications that were made from 1822 to 1825, with regard to the European trade, were, that the prohibition which before existed against the import of any spicery, grocery, and wines, from the Netherlands and Germany, was taken off, and all the produce of countries in Europe was allowed to be imported, not only in ships of the country of which the goods were the produce, but also in ships of the country from which it was exported. As to Asia, Africa, and America, the rule was adopted, that the produce of those countries might be imported either in British ships, or in ships of the countries of which the goods were the produce; and, lastly, the trade of our colonies with foreign countries was placed on its present footing. Reciprocity treaties then began to be entered into, and from that time to 1830 a good many were concluded."

The evidence of Mr. Lefevre, Joint Secretary to the Board of Trade, given before the Committee of the House of Lords, affords an able summary of the law as it now exists:—

“ The subject may be conveniently divided into three parts, the coasting trade; the trade with the colonies; and the trade with foreign countries. With regard to the coasting trade, practically it is entirely limited to British ships manned entirely by British seamen. With regard to the trade between the colonies and the mother-country, and between the colonies themselves, and also with regard to the colonial coasting trade, as a general rule that is also confined to British ships; but the regulation as to their Manning is not quite so stringent: they may be manned by not less than three-fourths British seamen and not more than one-fourth foreigners. With regard to the trade between the United Kingdom and foreign countries, that again subdivides itself into two parts, first, the trade with Europe; and the other division is the trade with Asia, Africa, and America; and the law with regard to these cannot be stated more briefly than it is stated in the very short enactments of the Navigation Act; taking first the trade with Asia, Africa, and America, the fourth clause of the Navigation Act enacts, ‘ That goods, the produce of Asia, Africa, or America, shall not

be imported into the United Kingdom, to be used therein, in foreign ships, unless they be the ships of the country in Asia, Africa, or America, of which the goods are the produce, and from which they are imported.' And with regard to the trade with Europe, that is regulated by the second and third clauses of the Act, of which the former, relating to certain enumerated goods being the principal articles of import from Europe, declares that they 'shall not be imported into the United Kingdom, to be used therein, except in British ships, or in the ships of the country of which the goods are the produce, or in ships of the country from which the goods are imported.' The fourth clause prevents the importation of Asiatic, African, or American goods from Europe into this country. With regard to the trade between the British colonies and foreign countries, the general rule is expressed in the eleventh section of the Navigation Act, namely, 'that no goods shall be imported into any British possession in Asia, Africa, or America, in any foreign ships, unless they be ships of the country of which the goods are the produce, and from which the goods are imported.'

" Goods manufactured in Europe, from materials of Asiatic produce, are treated as European goods. A parcel of ostrich feathers was introduced from France, which was an extreme case; flour is also considered manufactured produce, as well as refined sugar. The least possible manufacture, that changes the quality of the article in the slightest degree, gives it a title to be introduced according to law. The duties upon refined sugar prevented practically its importation into this country before the alteration in the sugar duties; and I should apprehend now that they must have that effect on sugars the produce of Asia, Africa, or America, refined in Europe, the duty on which is three guineas on a hundred-weight. Only a very small quantity has actually come from Europe for consumption. But there has been a question between Holland and this country, and rather an important one, as to their right to import refined sugar into this country at the low duty, *i. e.* at the duty chargeable on refined sugar imported from the place of its growth, which is at present £.1 10s. or £.1 6s. 8d. per cwt. If that question be decided in favour of Holland, of course there will be such an importation.

" When the Act of Parliament uses the words 'any country,' it does not include the dependencies of any country; the produce of French colonies does not come in as the produce of France. The Queen has certain special power granted to her to alter the trade and navigation of certain colonies without an Act of Parliament, partly by the Navigation Act itself, and partly by the Act usually called the Possessions Act, which is chap. 93 of the 8th and 9th Victoria; but the Queen cannot grant more than the Navigation Law grants. It is clause ninety

under which the Queen may regulate the trade with certain colonies:—‘ It shall be lawful for Her Majesty, by and with the advice of her privy council, by any order or orders in council to be issued from time to time, to give such directions and make such regulations touching the trade and commerce to and from any British possessions on or near the continent of Europe, or within the Mediterranean Sea, or in Africa, or within the limits of the East India Company’s charter (excepting the possessions of the said Company) as to her Majesty in council shall appear most expedient and salutary, anything in this Act to the contrary notwithstanding; and if any goods shall be imported or exported in any manner contrary to any such order of her Majesty in council, the same shall be forfeited, together with the ship importing or exporting the same.’ A British merchant under this law can export from this country in any ship to any foreign country.

“ The treaty with Austria of 1838, by which the ports of the Danube were considered as Austrian ports for the purposes of the Navigation Laws, was afterwards made legal by an Act passed in August 1840, which Act gave power to the Crown to permit importations into this country to take place from ports at the mouths of any rivers without reference to the particular parts of those rivers where the production might come from. It is under that Act, for the most part, that the different deviations from the strict Navigation Law have been subsequently made by orders in council, in consequence of treaties with different parts of Germany, with Hanover, Oldenburg, Mecklenburg, and other parts of Germany.”

In answer to the question—“ That Act of Parliament being the only authority for the Crown to issue those orders in council, how came they to consider the position, for instance, of Mecklenburg to be such as to give them the right to bring goods from all the ports between the Elbe and the Meuse, since neither the Elbe, nor certainly anything between the Elbe and the Meuse can possibly be considered as countries watered by rivers in the duchy of Mecklenburg? Do not you consider that a great stretch of the power given to the Crown by the provisions of that Act, the object of that Act being, as its preamble states, and as its enacting clause states, to make provision for that state of things, *viz.* that the ports of export need not be within the dominions of the States from which the goods come, but may be any ports at the mouths of certain rivers watering those States?”—Mr. Lefevre replied, “ I at once admit that it is extremely difficult to make out that the ports between the Elbe and the Meuse, or at least some of those ports, have any connexion whatever with Mecklenburg. The terms of the enactment are decidedly wider than those of the preamble, and they make no reference whatever to the rivers. I think these orders were, for

the most part, issued under this Act of 1840, but the orders were supposed to have validity in consequence of the doctrine, that the States forming the German Confederation, or the States forming the Zollverein, might be regarded as one only for commercial purposes. Mecklenburg is one of the German Confederation, though not one of the Zollverein States.

“ The privilege granted to some of the German States separately has been claimed by Holland. If I am not mistaken, Holland has claimed whatever privileges of this nature have been granted to the other countries alluded to. The granting the privilege would enable the ships of Holland to trade from Memel. I mention that as the extreme point. And any other nation having a treaty under the Favoured Nations Clause could claim the same privilege ; but that might involve a question of construction of treaties. I think it threatens to break down the Navigation Law to a great extent with regard to all the countries which are under the Favoured Nations Clause. As yet Dutch ships have not been permitted to import goods here from Memel as from a Dutch port. This is a point which I wished to correct in my former evidence. I thought that directions had been given to admit the ships of Holland from those ports. I understand that such directions were not given ; but it was intended to propose to the Legislature to give to the Crown the power of giving those directions. The treaty is one way, though the law may be another. The admission of the right claimed by Holland would break down the principle of the Navigation Law, so as to admit the ships of certain States to the carrying trade between England and other States.”

In reply to the question—“ Does not that construction involve this absurdity, that Holland has a right of calling upon the Crown of England, in virtue of the Act which places it upon the footing of the most favoured nation, to pass an order in council, declaring Memel the most convenient port for the shipment of the goods of Holland ?”—Mr. Lefevre stated—“ That which Holland claims, and which, I presume, speaking my own opinion only, the treaty might be considered to give her, would be that her ships should be admitted here from Memel and certain other ports upon the same terms that Hanoverian ships or Oldenburg ships are admitted. With respect to the particular mode of conferring the privilege, of course Holland would leave that to the Government of this country, but she would insist upon the thing being done in some way or other ; it could not be done under such an order as this, but it would require an alteration of the law for the purpose, and that would apply to any port that does not fall exactly within the definition of being the most convenient port of the State. This not only affects those goods which are commonly called ‘ enumerated articles,’ it has also another important effect with regard to the trade between those States and our colonies. The Navigation

Act imposes a double restriction on the trade with our colonies ; for it says in clause eleven, ' No goods shall be imported into any British possession in Asia, Africa, or America, in any foreign ships, unless they be ships of the country of which the goods are the produce, and from which the goods are imported ;' consequently, if it were not for these orders in council, Prussia could not export from Hamburg even Prussian goods to our colonies.

" The French have not the power of importing wine from their own country into our colonies in their own vessels ; the wine trade is confined to British ships. France does not permit us to trade freely with her colonies ; but, nevertheless, certain limited privileges have been granted to France in regard to trading with our colonies. She is allowed to import a considerable number of articles into our colonies, but not wine : the concession was first made in June 1826, and it was extended subsequently by other orders in council. And here I must observe, that although I have cited above the enactments now existing on this subject, which are contained in the Navigation Act and British Possessions Act of 1845, yet corresponding enactments have been in force since 1825 in the Navigation Act and British Possessions Act which were then passed, and which were renewed in 1833. The orders to which I allude were made under these earlier enactments. Spain has not any right of trading with our colonies from Spain itself ; but there is an order in council, authorising trade between the Spanish colonies and the British colonies ; but I think that it applies only to the produce of the Spanish colonies, *i. e.*, that Spanish ships may import from the Spanish colonies into the British colonies goods the produce of those Spanish colonies. I do not at the moment remember whether there is a corresponding permission in regard to British colonies importing to the Spanish colonies. Portugal has the power of trading with our colonies. There is an order in council of the 2nd of November, 1842, giving Portuguese ships the power of importing goods the produce of Portugal into our colonies without any exception."

With reference to the number of British seamen per 100 tons which a British ship is obliged to carry, Mr. Lefevre stated—" I believe the law does not require that British ships should carry a certain number of British seamen according to the tonnage, unless there are foreign seamen on board. Supposing a British ship to have no foreign seamen, there is no law requiring a certain proportion between the seamen and the tonnage ; but supposing a British ship to carry foreign seamen as well as British seamen, it must then have one British seaman for every twenty tons. Provided the foreign seamen do not exceed one-fourth, they may carry any number of seamen. I

conceive that a Negro seaman, born in one of the British West India colonies, is as much a British seaman as a white man would be; but I do not know how a Lascar is to become a British seaman for the purposes of the Navigation Law. I do not see how he can be naturalized; and even if he were so, he would not be deemed a 'British seaman.'"

CHAPTER VII.

NELSON AND COLLINGWOOD SUPPORTERS OF THE NAVIGATION LAWS.

IT may not be altogether a disagreeable episode, as it is not irrelevant, if I introduce in this place, before proceeding to the practical consideration of the Navigation Laws, a passage in the lives of two of England's most devoted public servants, Lord Nelson and Lord Collingwood. The circumstances which are narrated by the former officer arose out of certain departures from, or evasions of, the Navigation Laws by the Americans. The danger thereby involved to the maritime interests of the country were immediately discovered by the clear-sighted Nelson. He fore-saw that if the corrupt practices of the Custom-house authorities were not checked, the West India trade would speedily be wholly monopolized by the Americans; and, in defiance of threats, and unsupported by his commander-in-chief, we find him unhesitatingly seizing offenders against the law. Conduct so spirited had the desired effect: it checked the American trade, and restored British shipping to its rightful occupation. In pursuing the course he did, Nelson has left us his opinion, that it is imperative upon England to maintain the Navigation Laws, for that upon them "*the wealth and safety of Great Britain depend*:"—

Captain Nelson's Narrative of his Proceedings in support of the Navigation Act for the Suppression of illicit Traffic in the West Indies: apparently written towards the end of June 1786.

[From a Copy, signed by Captain Nelson, in the possession of William Henry Whitehead, Esq.]

“The Boreas arrived in Barbadoes in June 1784. I very soon found that the Bay was full of Americans, who were lading and unlading without molestation. I inquired of Captain Sotherby, who had commanded a Post ship on this station before the peace, and of Captain Boston, who commanded the Latona, if the Americans traded with our islands, and if they had no orders from the Admiral to keep them from trading with the British colonies. They both told me they had no orders to hinder them from coming to our ports, and they had never done it. Captain Boston showed me his orders, which had not a syllable in them indicating a wish to see the Navigation Act was attended to.

“Captain Collingwood” (afterwards Vice-Admiral Lord Collingwood), “told me he was very much afraid that the Navigation Act was not in the least attended to by the Admiral, for the colonies were full of Americans, which the Custom-house encouraged (by their conduct) to trade to our islands, instead of seizing them, which they ought to have done, agreeably to the Act of Navigation, their oath, and the instructions of the Board of Customs.

“In July, the squadron was laid up in English harbour for the hurricane season. I was once or twice at St. John’s, at which place the American flags were by far the most numerous; and had it been possible I could have been set down from the air, I should most assuredly have been convinced I had been in an American, instead of a British port.

“I heard one of the masters of these Americans say he had given five joes for his permission to unload. I am convinced there had better not be any officers than bad ones; for they encourage these people to transgress our laws, which they dare not do so openly, if they had not permission. I told Sir Richard Hughes of what I had seen, but he seemed not to take any notice of it, more than saying, he believed it was the case in all the islands; and to show Sir Richard Hughes’s sentiments upon this matter more fully, the following is an extract of a letter from Captain Collingwood, of the Mediator, at Grenada, with the Admiral’s answer:—

“ ‘I must inform you, Sir, that ships and vessels sometimes arrive here and load, which I very much suspect to be the property of Americans. It is true they generally procure papers and a register, representing them the pro-

erty of merchants in the colonies, which may pass them on a cursory examination, yet they are not less Americans, and navigated by foreign seamen. *It is from the idea that the greatness and the superiority of the British Navy very much depends on preserving inviolate the Act of Navigation, excluding foreigners from access to the colonies, that I am induced to make this representation to you, and to request that I may receive your particular instructions relative to them.*

Answer.—“ ‘ The circumstance you mention of a number of American vessels appearing to carry on a trade with these islands, is, I find, common to the whole of them, and their admission into the several ports, together with the disposal of their cargo, I conceive to rest entirely with the civil governors, and the Collector of the Customs, who have particular instructions on that behalf; and therefore I should not choose to interfere in any such matter, especially as I have no instructions so to do. But I agree with you that the Americans have many methods of procuring registers and other papers to serve their particular purposes, and probably by very illegal and improper means.’

“ In the beginning of November, 1784, the whole squadron rendezvoused at Barbadoes to receive their orders, when I received mine. I found no orders whatever relative to these foreigners (Americans) trading to our colonies. I found the orders of Captain Collingwood were similar to mine: therefore, upon consideration with Captain Collingwood, we thought it proper and right to ask the Admiral what he would have us do in regard to the Act of Navigation, which Act requires us to seize foreigners trading to our colonies, and was particularly directed to admirals, commanders, &c.

“ On the 10th of November I went with Captain Collingwood to wait upon the Admiral, saying that as his orders had not mentioned anything relative to the trade of the islands, I was come to ask him about it. With respect, I took the liberty of mentioning I thought that the men-of-war were placed in this country in times of peace, not merely to guard against any sudden attack, but for the more especial purpose of taking care that our trade was carried on through those channels which the legislature had ordered, and that it was to be carried on in British-built vessels—vessels entirely owned by British subjects, and navigated with the master and three-fourths of the mariners British, agreeable to the Act of Navigation, which I looked upon the wisdom of the legislature had directed to us, knowing that sea-officers must be the best of judges of vessels, and the best investigators of everything concerning them, that I felt myself not only authorised, but required. The Admiral stopped me from proceeding by asking me if I had got the Act of Navigation, that no instructions had been sent from the Admiralty to him about those matters. I observed that the Act of Navigation was furnished, I believe to every officer in the navy, as were a number of maritime laws, in a book entitled ‘ The

Statutes of the Admiralty.' He desired to see my book, for he had not one; and next morning desired to see Captain Collingwood and myself on the subject. We attended the Admiral, and showed him the Act of Navigation, which he said he had never seen or noticed before, but that he should now give orders to the ships to see it carried into execution. Accordingly the following order was given to the squadron:—

“ ‘ By Sir Richard Hughes, Bart., &c. &c. &c.

“ ‘ Whereas I think it my particular duty to take care that all the powers given and directed to be preserved and enforced by the Act of Navigation, passed in the 12th year of the reign of King Charles II., entitled, An Act for encouraging and increasing of Shipping and Navigation, shall be regularly and constantly observed by the squadron serving under my command, as far as the said Act relates to the exclusion of all foreigners from trading with any of the West India colonies belonging unto Great Britain.

“ ‘ You are hereby required and directed (as far as shall unto you respectively appertain) to cause the said Act above mentioned to be constantly complied with in all its force and forms, remembering that the States of North America, which do not now remain under the dominion of his Majesty, are to be considered as foreigners, and excluded from all commerce with the islands in these seas, in like manner as the prohibition extends to other foreign nations; and you are hereby authorised and required to proceed against all attempts of illicit trade by the Americans, or any other standing in the above predicament, as the Act of Navigation commands and directs, for doing all which this shall be your order and sufficient warrant.

“ ‘ Given, &c., Adamant, Barbadoes,

“ ‘ 12th November, 1784.

“ ‘ By command of the Admiral,

“ ‘ Leonard Horner.

“ ‘ RICHARD HUGHES.

“ ‘ To Captain Nelson, Boreas.’

“ The Rattler sloop, Captain Wilfred Collingwood, was put under my command, and we were stationed at the Leeward Islands, except Antigua.

“ I went to Tortola, &c., and came back to Barbadoes in December, where I began my career by turning away all the American vessels who attempted to enter the port. On the 4th of January [1785] I arrived at Montserrat, where I found an American schooner which had landed her cargo. I turned him away with a caution of never being found again amongst our islands. I did not think proper to seize him, as the Custom-house was much more to blame than the man; for he was under his national colours, and had no appearance of an attempt to impose on or deceive the officers of the revenue. On the 7th I arrived at Nevis, where I found another American, who I turned away, not choosing to seize him for similar reasons. On the 9th I went to Basseterre Road, St. Christopher's, where I found the Rattler. Captain Collingwood acquainted me of

the numerous American vessels who frequented that island, and that he had turned away all he had found but that if ever the ship went out of port for a few days, the Custom-house allowed them to fill again ; that a protest was all the Custom-house required, and the Americans were always very compliant in furnishing whatever the rules of office required at the expense of any number and sort of oaths that were wished for.

“ Two days after my arrival, I received the following order :—

“ ‘ By Sir Richard Hughes, Bart., &c.

“ ‘ Whereas, since the delivery of my order to you of the 12th of November last (relative to enforcing a due obedience to the Act of Navigation, passed in the 12th year of the reign of King Charles II.), I have more fully and maturely considered what is required and authorised to be done by his Majesty’s commanders and naval forces, conformably to the said Act, and having likewise received the opinion of the King’s Attorney-General upon that subject, I do now think proper to require you, in the execution of my first order here referred to, to observe the following directions, and in future to act agreeably thereunto.

“ ‘ When any foreign ship or vessel shall appear disposed to come into or anchor in any part of the British Leeward Islands, within the limits of your station, or where you may occasionally be found with his Majesty’s ship under your command, you are to cause the said ship or vessel to be anchored near the King’s ship, and there order her to remain (except in case of immediate and urgent distress), until her arrival and situation in all respects shall be reported to his Majesty’s Governor (or his representative for the time being) at any of the British islands where you may happen to fall in with the said foreign ship or vessel ; and if after such report shall have been made and received, the Governor or his representative shall think proper to admit the said foreigner into the port or harbour of the island where you may then be, you are on no account to hinder or prevent such foreign ship or vessel from going in accordingly, or to interfere any further in her subsequent proceedings. For doing which, this shall be your order and sufficient warrant.

“ ‘ Given, &c., Adamant, Barbadoes,

“ ‘ By command of the Admiral,

“ ‘ 29th December, 1784,

“ ‘ Leonard Horner.

“ ‘ RICHARD HUGHES.

“ ‘ To Captain Nelson,

“ ‘ Boreas.’

“ Upon which I sent the following letter :—

[January 11th or 12th, 1785.]

“ ‘ SIR,

“ ‘ I yesterday received your order of the 29th of December, wherein you direct me in the execution of your first order, dated the 12th of November (which is in fact strictly requiring us to put the Act of Navigation, *upon which the wealth and safety of Great Britain so much depend in force*), to observe the following directions, viz.: To cause foreigners to anchor by his Majesty’s ship under my command, except in cases of immediate and urgent

distress, until her arrival and situation in all respects shall be reported to his Majesty's Governor or his representative at any of the islands where I fall in with such foreign ships or vessels; and that if the Governor or his representative should give leave for admitting such vessels, strictly charging me not to hinder them, or interfere in their subsequent proceedings.

“ ‘ I ever have been, as in duty bound, always ready to co-operate with his Majesty's Governors or their representatives in doing whatever has been for the benefit of Great Britain. No Governor will, I am sure, do such an illegal act as to countenance the admission of foreigners into the ports of their islands, nor *dare* any officer of his Majesty's Customs enter such foreigners without they are in such distress that necessity obliges them to unlade their cargoes, and then only to sell such a part of it as will pay the costs. In distress no individual shall exceed me in acts of generosity; and in judging of their distress no person can know better than sea-officers, of which I shall inform the Governors, &c., when they acquaint me for what reason they have countenanced the admission of foreigners.

“ ‘ I beg leave to hope that I may be properly understood when I venture to say, that at a time when Great Britain is using every endeavour to suppress illicit trade at home, it is not wished that the ships upon this station should be singular, by being the only spectators of the illegal trade which I know is carried on at these islands. The Governors may be imposed upon by false declarations; we, who are on the spot, cannot. General Shirley told me and Captain Collingwood how much he approved of the methods that were carrying on for suppressing the illegal trade with America; that it had ever been his wish, and that he had used every means in his power, by proclamation and otherwise, to hinder it: but they came to him with protests, and swore through everything (even, as the sea-phrase is, ‘ through a nine-inch plank'), therefore got admittance, as he could not examine the vessels himself; and further, by the Thynne packet he had received a letter from Lord Sydney, one of his Majesty's principal Secretaries of State, saying that Administration were determined that American ships and vessels should not have any intercourse with our West India Islands; and that he had, upon an address from the Assembly, petitioning that he would relax the King's proclamation for the exclusion of Americans, transmitted it to Lord Sydney to be laid before the King. The answer to General Shirley was, that his Majesty firmly believed and hoped that all his orders which were received by his Governors would be strictly obeyed.

“ ‘ Whilst I have the honour to command an English man-of-war, I never shall allow myself to be subservient to the will of any Governor, nor co-operate with him in doing *illegal acts*. Presidents of Council I feel myself superior to. They shall make proper application to me, for whatever they may want to come by water.

“ ‘ If I rightly understand your order of the 29th of December, it is founded upon an opinion of the King's Attorney-General, viz. ‘ That it is legal for Governors or their representatives to admit foreigners into the ports of their Government, if they think fit.' How the King's Attorney-General conceives he has a right to give an illegal opinion, which I assert the above is, he must answer for. I know the Navigation Laws.

“ ‘ I am, Sir, &c.

“ ‘ HORATIO NELSON.'

"This order I was exceedingly sorry to see from the hands of Sir Richard Hughes. I was convinced that his easy temper had made him the dupe of some artful people, whose interest it so much was to see the Americans fill the ports of our islands. It attached the inhabitants to them ; it also filled their pockets ; and to fill them it is my firm opinion they would not stop at any means, however injurious to Great Britain. These gentry well knew, that if the men-of-war were once seriously determined to suppress this evil, that many emoluments would cease, and that they would in time be exposed by the tricks which had been played. It was their business, first of all, to insinuate we had no authority to seize ; that the part of the Navigation Act upon which he had founded his order of the 12th of November, was repealed ; and that no person could seize vessels of any description whatever, but by deputation from the Board of Customs.

"As by law I could not lay by and see these foreign vessels trade, which they would most certainly have obtained leave to do had they any communication with the shore, I constantly turned them away without allowing them to land. But whenever the ship was absent, the ports were filled ; and upon the man-of-war's coming in sight, they cut or slipped and got away. In January I sent the Rattler to Sandy Point to take copies of the American-built vessels' registers granted by the Custom-house of that place. All that were there were American-built. In short, I found that all our trade would be very soon carried on in American-built vessels—vessels manned entirely by American seamen ; and not only those disadvantages, they were, I believe I may say all, owned by the subjects of the States of America, and only covered by British people, or Americans settled in our islands. The Custom-houses seemed to glory in the ruin they were heaping upon Great Britain, and seemed to think they were beyond the reach of power, for they minded nothing if the men would but swear official oaths. Such being the conduct of the officers of the Customs, I felt myself obliged, for the benefit of my country, to declare that after the 1st day of May, 1785, I would seize all American vessels trading to our islands, let them be registered by whom they might. The Custom-house laughed at my presumption (as I understood), and said I had no right, and dare not do it, for if I did it, that I should be sued, and cast in damages. To show my determination, on the 2nd of May, 1785, I seized the schooner Eclipse for being an American-built vessel, owned at Philadelphia, and navigated entirely by Americans, although she was registered at St. Christopher's. Upon laying the case before the Crown lawyer, he doubted my right of seizing.

"Notwithstanding Mr. Adye's doubts as to my right of seizing by virtue of my commission as captain of the navy, he proceeded in the suit. The Custom-house likewise came and

seized her, as they asserted I had no right. On the 17th, the trial came on against me. The Customs had retained several lawyers. Mr. Adye said much as to seizing for the King, but in such a manner as appeared to me that although his inclination was the best in the world to serve the cause, yet he did not think my right of seizing could be established. I was therefore necessitated to plead for myself; and after much being said on all sides, the Judge thought fit to give it in my favour, by saying I had an undoubted right to seize vessels transgressing the Navigation Laws. However Mr. Adye might have been over-seen in his opinion as to the right of seizure, in a few days, after studying the maritime laws, and his Majesty's proclamation, he was perfectly convinced that I was right, and all the lawyers, &c., wrong; and by his manly, upright, honourable conduct since, in supporting the rights of the navy, he has made most ample amends for any doubts he might at first have entertained. In justice to him I must say, that by night as by day his advice has always been ready, and that too without fee or reward. On the 23rd I seized four vessels at Nevis for carrying British registers, although they were American-built, navigated by all Americans, and some of them entirely owned by foreigners. Two of them were registered at the Leeward Islands; one at Dominica by Governor Orde; and the other at St. Lucia during the time of the British, but had since been trading at Barbadoes. On the 25th Sir Richard Hughes arrived. He did not appear to me to be pleased with my conduct; at least he did not approve of it, but told me I should get into a scrape. On the 27th, writs were taken out against me for four thousand pounds, and I understood subscriptions were set on foot in the islands to carry on the prosecution against me. Seven weeks I was kept a close prisoner to my ship; nor did I ever learn that the Admiral took any steps for my release. I had no alternative to save myself from being ruined, but to lay my case in a memorial before the King. My commander-in-chief did not even acquaint the Admiralty board how cruelly I had been treated; nor of the attempts which had been made to take me out of my ship by force, and that indignity offered under the fly of his flag.

"After these seizures I kept the coast clear of Yankees until the hurricane season, when I repaired to English harbour. The Admiral seemed much pleased when I paid him prize-money; but to the end of the station, his order of the 29th of December, 1784, was never repealed, so that I always acted with a rod over me.

"In September I received a letter from Lord Sydney, acquainting me that his Majesty had been graciously pleased to order me to be defended by his lawyers.

"On the 17th of October I sailed from English Harbour, and on the 21st I seized the brig Active for being an American-

built vessel navigated contrary to law. I found a violent ferment in men's minds relative to an opinion which Doctor Scott had sent out to the officers of the Customs of Basseterre; and great doubts had arisen as to the propriety of my seizing. I therefore wrote to Lord Sydney. The following is an extract:—

“ ‘ My former letters and memorial specified that his Majesty’s proclamation was most shamefully evaded, by connivance in some, and imposition in others, of the officers of the customs; so that nearly the whole trade, between the British Colonies and the United States of America, was carried on in American bottoms. To see the American ships and vessels, with their colours flying, in defiance of the laws, and by permission of the officers of the Customs, loading and unloading in our ports, was too much for a British officer to submit to. I could not even by a tacit acquiescence suffer a commerce so prejudicial to Britain to be carried on, legal or illegal: I was fully determined to suppress it.

“ ‘ We know that commerce is the enricher of every country; and where she flourishes most, that will be the greatest country. I felt it my duty, and certainly it was my inclination, to preserve the carrying trade to our country, as it encouraged British artificers, manufacturers, and seamen. At this moment there are nearly fifty sail employed in the trade, between the islands of St. Kitts, Nevis, and America, which are truly British built, owned, and navigated. Had I been an idle spectator (without, I hope, being accused of arrogance), my firm belief is, that not a single vessel would have belonged to these islands in the foreign trade. I could wish to have the opinion of the Crown lawyers in England touching these matters, and Doctor Scott’s opinion. A doubt is now started (and I may probably be persecuted in this country upon it), that if the Custom-house give leave to a foreigner to trade, I have no right to hinder him, but must look on as an idle spectator. I am furnished very lately, by the Admiral, with his Majesty’s proclamation: I should even have esteemed that a sufficient authority for bringing to punishment all those who offend against it. But Doctor Scott has, by a general opinion, put these islands (which had recognised my right, and were all quiet), in a ferment against me.

“ ‘ I want not—I wish not—to be a Custom-house officer: for however honourable the protecting the revenue is, I must for ever derive my right of protecting it from my commission as Captain in the navy, and not by deputation from a board, with which I can have no possible connexion in my professional line. *My sincere wish and ambition are to prove myself a faithful servant to my country, by preserving to her the carrying trade to and from her own colonies.*’

“ In November, I received from the Admiralty the following extract of a letter from Mr. Rose, Secretary of the Treasury, to Mr. Stephens, Secretary of the Admiralty:—

“ ‘ I am commanded by their lordships to desire you will acquaint the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty that my lords are of opinion the Commander-in-Chief of the Leeward Islands and officers under him have

shown a very commendable zeal in endeavouring to put a stop to the illicit practices which were carrying on in the islands, in open violation of the law, and to the great detriment of the navigation and trade of his Majesty's dominions.'

" It is not from a wish that Sir Richard Hughes or any other person should not be thanked for the services they have rendered, but I own I was surprised that the commander-in-chief should be thanked for an act which he did not order, but which, if I understand the meaning of words, by his order of the 29th December, 1784, he ordered not to be. The Captains Collingwood were the only officers, with myself, who ever attempted to hinder the illicit trade with America ; and I stood singly with respect to seizing, for the other officers were fearful of being brought into scrapes. Thus much in justice to myself and the Captains Collingwood I have thought myself obliged to say."

THE NAVIGATION LAWS
OF
GREAT BRITAIN,
PRACTICALLY CONSIDERED,
WITH REFERENCE TO COMMERCE.

IN the foregoing division of my subject I have, possibly, evinced a strong feeling of opposition to the efforts of the abolitionists of the Navigation Laws; but it has been chiefly occasioned by the attempts which have been made by those in favour of the repeal, to distort history so as to make its records suit their purpose. The practical consideration, however, is one in which every-day facts, and opinions deduced from practice, must speak for themselves. "Greek" must "meet Greek" upon the arena of argument; and my part will be best performed by securing for each fair play. I have, therefore, with great care and the strictest impartiality, condensed the evidence of each witness who recently appeared before the Select Committee of the House of Lords. Had I had the command of more space I would also have given the substance of the evidence adduced upon the question before the Commons' Committee, because I am assured that it is only from such data that a right estimate can be formed of the operation of the law as it is, and of the probable consequences of a change. It must, however, be remembered, that the witnesses who gave evidence before the Lords' Committee were sworn. Not that this circumstance ought to have a very material bearing upon the evidence, for

I cannot believe that any gentleman would voluntarily state anything that was incorrect because he did not happen to be upon his oath. But, at the same time, there is something in the obligation of an oath which must have the effect of deterring men from speaking at random, and, by possibility, asserting as a fact that of which they are only partially assured. The witnesses who appeared before the Lords' Committee were, without doubt, selected on account of their particular calling or profession, and personal experience; and, if not summoned wholly without reference to pre-expressed opinions, they were, at least, invited to attend equally by the supporters of both sides of the question. Their sworn testimony must, therefore, possess great weight.

The first evidence to be submitted to the reader is that of Mr. George Richardson Porter, a gentleman holding a post of great responsibility at the Board of Trade. I have met with nothing which appears to me so important upon the abolition side of the question as the evidence of that gentleman; yet it is impossible to deny that theory is its prevailing component. But in matters of this kind, theory must be submitted to the searching test of practice. The most elaborately wrought fabric of theory may be dissipated by the first rude blast of practice; and, as the only value of theory is that of improving practice, it is obvious that to be appreciable it must be constructed with the view to encounter the shock of every practical element. With reference to the evidence of Mr. Porter, I have to remark that I have retained the catechetical arrangement, because it so often happened that his opinions were inducted by the question. The cross-examination to which that gentleman was subjected was no doubt occasioned by the conspicuous evidence given by him before the Commons' Committee, and which had been the theme of much controversy both within and without the walls of Parliament.

With respect to the evidence of other witnesses, I have adopted a narratory form, which in some instances embodies the question in the answer. This has been done with a view to conciseness, and to render the facts clearly intelligible. Great part of the published evidence is composed of questions put and answered without any definite result. Some witnesses relied upon the statements or writings of others, and supplied quotations from authorities, instead of stating the facts of their personal experience, which could alone give weight to their testimony. By removing all such valueless matter, space has been gained for more solid pabulum, and which I now without further preface submit to the reader. I again express my anxiety to condense this evidence impartially. Condensed it must be, either mentally by the reader, or by some such process as that I have used, to be available; and I trust, that whatever may be alleged against my deductions, I may at least be allowed the credit of having equably reduced into a small compass a mass of most valuable data.

George Richardson Porter, Esq. called in*, and examined as follows :—

“The Committee understand that you are desirous to give an explanation of a paper which appears in your evidence given before the Committee of the House of Commons on the Navigation Laws, which is headed, ‘A Statement of the Tonnage of British Ships that entered the Ports of the United Kingdom from different foreign Countries and British Possessions in each of the years 1824 and 1846; distinguishing the Tonnage employed in the Trade with British Possessions, and which is protected by the Navigation Laws, from the Tonnage employed in the Trade with foreign Countries, and which is unprotected from Competition with foreign Ships?’—The explanation I should offer is this: I did not prepare the table of my own accord, but I was instructed by the Chairman of the Committee of the House of Commons, Mr. Milner Gibson, to draw it up. It was in consequence of evidence given by Mr. Young that I was

* Mr. Porter was examined on three several occasions: on the 9th March, and 18th and 19th May; and his evidence will be found at full length in the Report of the Select Committee of the House of Lords, at pp. 11 and 456.

instructed to draw up an account of the trade of this country with those countries where we still retained full protection, viz. our own possessions; and of the trade with countries which were not in that condition owing to the Reciprocity Treaties. The heading of the table was incorrect, I admit, but it deceived nobody; for it was well understood by everybody that the table had reference to the effect of the Treaties of Reciprocity, and to no other subject whatever. An objection has been made, that the trade with some of the countries which appears on the side of unprotected trade should have been placed on the other side; because, for instance, China has no ships, and Russia has no ships, and Brazil has no ships. I have, therefore, in order to see what difference it would make, taken those trades out of the unprotected trades, and placed them on the protected side; and I find the result to be, that whereas in the table the increase on the protected side is 94.37 per cent., it would have been 91.32 per cent., and on the unprotected trades, if I take out from them the trade with China, Russia, and Brazil, I find instead of the increase being 182.98 per cent., it would be 232.54 per cent., so that the table, instead of making more in favour of the doing away with protection than was justified, is the other way; and supposing that the trade with China, Russia, and Brazil ought not to appear on the unprotected side, it makes the amount a great deal better for those who advocate the abolition of the Navigation Laws than it would otherwise be.

" You say you have taken out Russia, China, and Brazil; the Committee do not observe the name of Brazil in the table?—It is included among the South American States.

" Is not that remark equally applicable to the whole of the South American States?—I did not hear the objection made as to any countries but Brazil, Russia, and China being included in the unprotected trade, and, therefore, I have shaped my amended table accordingly.

" But the whole of the South American provinces have no sea-going vessels?—No; their marine is very small.

" Then whatever comparison you make, on the same principle ought to exclude the whole of the South American provinces?—Probably it ought. I had not heard that objection made, but feeling that the remark might be considered to apply to the whole of the South American countries, I have made out a table excluding those, and I find that if you take out the whole of South America, together with China and Russia and Mexico, and place their trade on the protected side, the increase on the protected side is 99.32 per cent., but on the unprotected side it is 219 per cent.

" You have excluded Russia and Brazil and China from your calculation upon the ground of those countries having no mercantile marine; but are there not other countries in the list, which you have introduced under the head of unprotected

trades, which are equally without a mercantile marine of their own ; for instance, Turkey ?—Probably it is so. I merely followed orders in constructing that table.

“ Who instructed you to prepare that table ?—The Chairman of the Committee of the House of Commons, who is also Vice-President of the Board of Trade, and with whom I am in constant communication.

“ Does not the steam tonnage enter largely into the trade between this country and countries which appear here under the head of unprotected trades. For instance, as regards the United Netherlands and France, you gave an increase of from 68,285 tons in 1824 to 274,067 in Holland, and 108,908 tons in Belgium ; is not a very large proportion of that steam tonnage ?—Yes.

“ Therefore this shows the increase of trade, but not the increase of shipping ?—Clearly.

“ What is the point which you consider to be established by this table ?—That the Treaties of Reciprocity into which we have entered have had no injurious effect upon the trade and shipping of this country.

“ Do you consider that the amount of passenger-traffic carried on by those steam vessels at all affects the general trade between the countries ?—The passenger-traffic is not included where the vessels carry passengers only. There are a good many which carry both passengers and goods.

“ Then that does not give the amount of shipping between the countries, but the number of repeated voyages between the two countries ?—Yes.

“ If there are circumstances in the intercourse between Holland and France on the one hand, and England on the other, which give the steam navigation to England rather than to those countries, that will give a smaller apparent value to the trade carried on by those two countries than in fact it really deserves ?—In that point of view it would.

“ As regards the number of ships employed and the number of sailors ?—Yes.

“ Does the same principle apply to the table which is given here as No. 5, ‘ A Statement of the Tonnage of Vessels, distinguishing British from foreign, and showing the proportions of each that entered and cleared from Ports in the United Kingdom in each year, from 1820 to 1846 ’ ?—It does ; it includes the repeated voyages. Our accounts are always made up in that way.

“ Does it include the coasting trade ?—It does not.

“ It appears that the British shipping entered inwards had risen from 2,617,166 tons in 1837, to 4,294,733 in 1846. From that you infer that there has been a great increase of British shipping ?—It is not a matter of inference ; it is a matter of fact.

"Will you turn to No. 1*, 'A Statement of the Tonnage of Shipping that belonged to the Ports of the United Kingdom, and its colonial Possessions, in each year, from 1821 to 1846.' In the year 1828 there was no very large amount of steam tonnage?—I cannot say the amount, but it has very materially increased since.

"It appears that, in 1828, the first year after the new Registry Act came into operation, the registered tonnage amounted to 2,193,300 tons; and in the year 1828, the tonnage entered inwards appears from table No. 5, to have been 2,094,357 tons?—It does.

"Therefore that is a smaller amount than the total amount of registered tonnage. But if you look at the return of the registered tonnage in the year 1846 you will find it amount to 3,199,785 tons, and, in table 5, you will find that in 1846 the tonnage entered inwards was 4,294,733 tons; so that instead of being somewhat less than the registered tonnage as it was in 1828, it exceeds the registered tonnage by more than a million tons? I think you should include in the account of registered tonnage the ships that belonged to the colonies, because they trade from the colonies to this country.

"But here is the tonnage of ships belonging to the ports of the United Kingdom and its colonial possessions; and in taking the figures under that head, and comparing the registered tonnage of 1846 with the tonnage entered inwards in 1846, I find that the registered tonnage was less than the amount of tonnage entered inwards by a million of tons. May not that be attributed to the steamers which came more into action in the subsequent years than in the preceding years?—No doubt it was owing to that.

"The amount of British tonnage entering inwards and clearing outwards appears to vary very considerably: the British tonnage entering inwards in the year 1847 appears to be 4,238,956 tons, from paper No. 5 in the Trade and Navigation Returns, and the amount cleared outwards was 3,205,794 tons; so that upon the face of the Return it would appear, unless a different rule be adopted in entering vessels that enter inwards and those that clear outwards, that of the tonnage entered inwards not less than a million did not clear outwards. Will you state what different rule is observed with reference to those entries?—Your Lordships will observe that the tonnage in the 'Trade and Navigation' Returns is stated to be 'exclusively of vessels in ballast,' while the other account includes all vessels which clear outwards, whether in ballast or with cargoes.

"But 'exclusively of vessels in ballast' appears at the head

* The statements referred to in this and subsequent questions are of too complicated a character to be inserted in this volume; but the reader desirous to consult them will find them in Parliamentary Paper, No. 588.

of the Return ; therefore vessels in ballast are excluded from both sides of the account ?—Clearly so ; but in the course of trade we receive a great deal more in point of bulk than we export ; we receive raw materials and we send away manufactured goods, and fewer ships, therefore, are required for our export trade than for our import trade, and, of course, many vessels go out in ballast which are not noticed here.

“ Will you look at No. 6 ? In Return No. 6 it appears that, of the shipping employed in the intercourse between Great Britain and Ireland, the entries inwards in the year 1847 were 1,296,610, and the clearances outwards were 2,047,387 ; so that the excess is on the other side : the excess is in the tonnage clearing outwards, which is more than the tonnage entering inwards. Do you know how that is to be accounted for ?—At the moment I cannot state how it arises.

“ The Return No. 11 shows that the tonnage of shipping registered in America for employment in the foreign trade in 1844 was 1,068,764 tons, and the tonnage entering inwards in 1844, as appears from Return No. 12, was 1,997,438 tons ; that will include the coasting trade and all the repeated voyages ?—No, it does not include the coasting trade. The coasting trade of the United States is not carried on by vessels which are registered, but by vessels which are licensed and enrolled*.

“ In Return No. 10, showing the number and tonnage of French and of English vessels that entered the ports of France from England in each year from 1830 to 1844, I find the total number, both of French and English ships, in 1830 was 2,196 of 153,668 tons, and that in 1844 they had increased to 6,422 ships and 619,300 tons. Do you suppose it possible that there could have been that increase in the trade between those two countries if there had not been therein included steam passenger vessels† ?—I conceive that there has been, to a far greater extent than is indicated by the figures your Lordship has quoted, an increase in the trade between France and England, for in the year 1830 the whole value of our exports to France did not amount to half a million of money, and at present they amount to within a small fraction of three millions.

“ Is the trade with France that description of trade which you class as trade influenced by Reciprocity Treaties or not ?—We have a Reciprocity Treaty with France of the ordinary description, that is, French vessels are placed upon the same footing with regard to port dues and light dues, and so on, as British vessels ; they are treated in the same way as British vessels in our ports, and British vessels are treated as French vessels in their ports. Goods passing between France and England pay the same duty, whether they go in English or in French ships.

“ But the duties as between France and England are different ?

* See p. 75, *post.*

+ See p. 77, *post.*

—Certainly ; that is a totally different question. We have been relaxing our tariff from time to time since 1830, and thereby have increased our trade, though France has not relaxed her tariff.

“ What amount of goods embarked on board a steam vessel would change it into the class of vessels requiring to be cleared inwards and outwards ; would not passenger luggage be almost sufficient to do it ?—No ; and there is a very good reason for supposing that vessels would not take on board a very small amount of cargo, for if they enter inwards from having a cargo they have to pay heavier port charges.

“ But if they took 1000 sovereigns they would be willing to enter inwards ?—Money is not considered merchandise.

“ The steamers that ply between Folkstone and Boulogne, and Dover and Calais, are not included among the vessels clearing in and out ?—No, they are not considered as carrying on the trade of the country.

“ You know that is the fact ?—I do*.

“ You have stated that we compete successfully with all nations. You are aware that we have no table before us of the state of the trade with Sweden at this moment ?—Not particularly with Sweden.

“ Are you aware of the state of trade with Norway as regards reciprocity ?—With regard to Norway, the mercantile marine of Norway only amounts to 302,000 tons.

“ Has not the Norwegian shipping very much increased upon us ?—I believe it has.

“ Has not the Swedish shipping also very much increased upon us ?—I believe the fact to be so.

“ Do not you consider that the coal miners, if they could ship cheaper in Norwegian or Swedish ships, would use those ships as carriers ?—I am quite convinced they could not do it cheaper.

“ Does it not require a great experience of the coast, it being a dangerous coast, in order to carry on the trade ?—I do not think any foreigner in his senses would ever enter into it, for that very reason—that it is a most difficult navigation ; and, in the winter time, to which the question has alluded, it is of course more difficult.

“ Do you carry your opinion in favour of free trade to the opening of the coasting trade as well as the other trade ?—Certainly I would do so, convinced that it would not be availed of.

“ Your opinion, then, that it would be no injury to the British shipowner, is founded upon the conviction that foreigners would not enter into the trade ?—That is my opinion.

“ If they did interfere it would be an injury to this country ?—That might not be the case.

“ You think that we might benefit by having the coasting

* See p. 77, *post.*

trade carried on by the Northern foreign ships?—We might be benefited by the stimulus given to us through competition.

“With reference to Paper No. 6, are you aware that those countries with which we have Reciprocity Treaties have become shipowners to such an extent as almost to obliterate our shipping entirely; that in the trade with Norway, for instance, we have practically no trade shipping, there being in the year 1846 only 29 British ships against 805 of theirs; that in the trade with Sweden against 485 of theirs there were 94 of ours, and with Denmark against 1502 of their vessels there were only 80 of ours*. Do not those facts tend to convince you that with this competition with those countries they do beat us out of the field, and that they do, in fact, navigate cheaper than we do?—I do not arrive at that conclusion from the facts. I arrive certainly at this conclusion, that we find means of employing our ships in ways that are more profitable to us than embarking in trade with the Swedes, and Norwegians, and Danes, which are the trades to which the question refers. I imagine, looking to the amount of capital that we have in this country, and the other ways we have of employing that capital, that we have devoted as large a portion of that capital as we can profitably devote in shipping; and our shipowners will, of course, seek for themselves the most profitable means of employment for their ships, and I believe they do so. And I further believe there is no shipowner in this country who would like to employ his ships in the trade which those foreign shipowners carry on, that arising from the character of the vessels of the countries to which your Lordships have alluded, as well as to the fact of the owners living in those countries; and that is an advantage which we have, on the other hand, with regard to our coasting trade here.

“Would not the British shipowner take the freights to those ports if he could afford to do so?—Yes, if he could not make more by going elsewhere.

“Whatever may be the demand for ships elsewhere, would not the shipping be increased and extended if a trade with the Northern powers could be carried on by our ships with advantage?—I imagine the shipping trade of this country is like every other trade, that it depends upon a variety of circumstances, upon the capability of the country to build ships, and to employ a certain amount of shipping. When I speak of the capability of the country, I mean the capital we have to embark in the trade, and the amount of trade we have to carry on. If we could by any means monopolize to ourselves the whole shipping trade of the world, I imagine we should not benefit ourselves by that means, for the capital that would necessarily be employed to construct ships must be abstracted from other employment, where it is as profitably or more profitably employed.

“It is a question not of monopolizing with our ships the

* See p. 97.

trade of the world, but it is a question of our shipping losing almost the entirety of the trade between this country and those foreign countries ; do you consider it immaterial, provided you have the carriage cheap, whether it is done by British ships or foreign ships ?—I do not consider it immaterial whether it is done by British ships or not ; but I believe that the energy of this country is such, that if we were to abolish our restrictions to-morrow we should carry off the palm from all nations in the world.

“ You expect the revival of our own shipping to be the result of our being better instructed, and understanding our business better than we do at present ?—I do not speak of the revival of British shipping, because I believe British shipping is in an exceedingly profitable state ; I believe the shipowners of this country have been making a good deal of money ; but I believe we shall increase our trade very much more without any protection than we have ever done with protection.

“ You would give to our competitors the means of employing their ships in the direct trade, and you are anxious to give them the indirect trade ; in fact, to let them trade freely from all parts of the world ?—I am anxious to do so, not for the purpose of benefiting the foreigner, but for the purpose of benefiting the British shipowner.

“ What is to determine the ability to meet the competition ?—It depends upon the return for capital with which the English merchant is content, as compared with the return for capital which will alone content the foreign shipowner. The rate of profit generally is lower in this country than in almost any other country by reason of the abundance of money : that is proved by the price of our funds, and the general rate of interest. I believe there is no country in the world where ships are built cheaper than they are in England, taking the quality and duration of the ships into account, the goodness of the materials, and the manner in which they are put together.

“ You stated that, in your opinion, an English ship could be built more cheaply than a foreign ship ; you mean looking to the superior manner in which the ship is put together, and not to the positive cheapness ?—I mean that an English ship is a better ship, and therefore a cheaper ship, having reference to quality.

“ If it should turn out, on inquiry of the best authorities, and from persons well calculated to form an opinion, that the expense of ship-building abroad is cheaper, and that the artisans employed in ship-building will work for lower wages, and that the seamen will work for lower wages and will feed upon lower food, is it not quite clear that before British shipowners can compete with foreign shipowners they must be reduced to the same rate of wages, and to the same mode of living ?—Certainly. If a foreign ship, equally good in all respects, costs less than

an English ship, and if the captain and crew are satisfied with less wages, and are satisfied with a lower description of provisions, and the owner is content to take a lower rate of profit, in that case he would compete successfully with the English shipowner, and drive him out of the trade; but I cannot conceive these facts to exist.

“ Do you consider that the people of this country are much aggrieved by the Navigation Law?—I consider that the general trade of this country is materially injured by the Navigation Law, and the people injured likewise. I consider it a great grievance that we cannot bring here from Europe for consumption an article which does not happen to be the produce of Europe, and which is cheaper in Europe than it happens to be here.

“ Does it not oblige him to go to the place where the produce is grown?—Yes.

“ Is not that the fountain-head of the produce?—Yes, no doubt it is.

“ And is not that the cheapest market?—It does not follow; for the produce may have been carried to a third market beyond the wants of that market, and the prices there may be reduced, so that it may be an advantage to the English merchant to go there and make his purchases rather than go to the fountain-head.

“ Is it not an advantage to this country that that produce so brought from the fountain-head should be brought in British ships?—Yes, I think it is.

“ Is it not a saving for the people of this country that they are not compelled to hire foreign ships?—I do not see that; I cannot conceive that to be the fact, because the foreign capital is employed in those ships, while ours will be employed somewhere else, and be as profitably or more profitably employed.

“ Would you throw out of employment the British ship-owner for the purpose of turning him over to some other trade?—Clearly not. My view of the question is, that if you abolished the Navigation Laws, you would give an impetus to ship-building and ship-owning in this country greater than there has been hitherto under restriction.

“ Can you show that by proof, rather than by the theories which you have entertained?—It appears to me that you do prove it, to some extent, by means of this table, which has been the subject of so much discussion; wherever you have relaxed you have increased your trade. I have mentioned incidentally that the trade with France under our relaxation has increased most materially, though France has done nothing in the same direction.

“ Unless you show that we have increased in a greater proportion than the foreigner, you do not give the whole case?—I imagine that you give the case which it is material for this

country to know, if you show that, instead of the trade being crippled and lessened, it has gone on increasing. I do not think it is detrimental to this country that the trade of the foreigner has increased also.

“ Will you state what America can give us for our opening their trade with our West India colonies?—America can allow us to import goods not the produce of this country in ships of our own. She can allow us to carry tea from China, and sugar from Cuba; and, in fact, to trade from all parts of the world with America.

“ Is it probable that America would interfere with the China trade?—I think it highly improbable. I think it would be more probable that we should interfere with the trade between America and China than that they should interfere with our trade.

“ Do not you think that American ships taking coarse materials to China would naturally load for England?—No, I do not think it at all likely; and looking at the shipping of America it has been rather a matter of astonishment to me that it does not increase in a larger degree than it has increased. I imagine that the Americans employ as much of their capital in shipowning as they can conveniently spare for the purpose. The trade and shipping of America have increased, but hitherto they have not increased in the like degree that ours has increased. Our shipping has gone on increasing threefold to that of the United States of America*.

“ Have you got any tables which will show the relative increase or decrease within the last few years of British and American vessels trading between Great Britain and America?—I have a statement of our trade with the United States of America in each year from 1815 to the last year:—

YEARS.	ENTERED.						CLEARED.					
	British.		Foreign.		Centesimal Proportion of Tonnage.		British.		Foreign.		Centesimal Proportion of Tonnage.	
	Ships.	Tons.	Ships.	Tons.	British.	Foreign.	Ships.	Tons.	Ships.	Tons.	British.	Foreign.
1815	133	32,602	409	117,683	21·69	78·31	268	69,890	377	107,447	39·41	60·59
1816	202	50,869	419	120,905	29·61	70·39	340	85,497	435	126,266	40·37	59·63
1822	138	37,985	500	156,054	19·33	80·67	275	70,044	446	138,072	33·70	66·30
1828	256	80,158	372	138,174	36·71	63·29	334	102,444	392	142,480	41·82	58·18
1834	281	94,658	492	204,529	31·64	68·36	387	133,754	546	220,913	37·71	62·29
1840	275	138,201	867	426,867	24·46	75·54	360	180,041	839	409,900	30·52	69·48
1846	330	205,123	744	435,399	32·02	67·98	439	260,164	700	426,312	37·90	62·10
1847*	997	437,005	1,361	651,189	40·16	59·84	1,002	455,220	1,143	597,257	43·25	56·75

* See p. 78, *post*.

+ The famine year. Mr. Porter gives the entries, &c., for every year from 1815 to 1847, but it loses no material force from being given for every fifth year.

"Are we not principally enabled to keep our ground in that trade by employing our timber-ships in carrying cotton?—I do not know how far that is the case.

"You stated that we need not be afraid of America competing with us in China. Are you aware of a paper prepared by Sir Henry Pottinger, in which there is a statement of cotton manufactures being imported in that year, being long-cloths of the first and second quality, to the extent of 300,000 dollars, and the third quality, or unbleached, to the extent of 1,000,000 dollars; and there is this note: 'Of the sum put down for grey long-cloths one-half may be assumed as American; domestics are entirely American; and we find it impossible to compete with them in that article'—I was not aware of that.

"In 1826 the United Kingdom tonnage was 2,411,000, in 1827 it appeared to be 2,181,000; but if you look, on the other hand, to the colonial registration the amount in 1826 was 224,000, and in 1827, 279,000: so that, instead of there being any decrease, there was a very large increase?—Colonial shipping has been a thing of rapid, but comparatively modern growth, and there would not, therefore, exist the same discrepancy between the register and the actual amount of such tonnage. In 1826 the shipping on the register amounted to 2,635,644 tons; there were built and registered in the year 1827 163,946 tons; there were lost and worn out in 1826 to the amount of 123,678 tons, irrespective of the loss which was discovered upon the new registration, reducing therefore the number on the register, including all vessels which continued there improperly, to 2,675,912 tons; but the number actually on the register so placed under the new Act was 2,460,500, so that the probable number in excess on the register in 1826 amounted to 215,421 tons.

"How low does this registry go?—Every vessel above 15 tons burden must be registered. I dare say it would include a colonial drogher, or the smallest description of coasting-vessel.

"In the comparative statement you have made between American and British tonnage did you deal with both those tonnages in the same way?—No; I took the registered tonnage in both cases.

"You took the registered tonnage of America, but you took the whole of the tonnage of England, did not you?—I may, but I do not recollect that I did make any comparative statement.

"You return the United States tonnage as 1,068,164 tons *?—It was somewhere thereabouts.

"And you return the English tonnage as 3,713,404 tons?—Yes.

"In the British tonnage you included the whole of the

* See p. 69, *ante*.

colonial tonnage, the tonnage of Asia, Africa, Australia, America, and the West Indies?—All that appears on the British register.

“The increase in the colonies has been in that time from 211,000 to 617,000, while the increase in the British shipping has only been from 2,348,000 to 3,199,000?—Yes; but though those vessels are built and registered in the colonies, they come over here, and are employed in the general trade of the kingdom.

“What was the amount of British tonnage engaged in the trade with the United States in 1824, and what in 1846?—In 1824 the British tonnage was 44,994 tons, and in 1846, 205,123; being an increase of 160,129 tons. The foreign tonnage which I presume to be American at each of these periods was 153,475 tons in 1824, and 441,166 tons in 1846; increase 281,924.

“The increase therefore in British tonnage appears to be 160,129 tons, and that of American 281,924 tons, which exceeds the British increase by nearly three-fourths?—It does.

“And yet, tested by the per-cent-age mode of representation, it would appear that British tonnage had increased 357 per cent., while that of America had only increased 180 per cent.?—The rates of increase are 355·8 per cent. British and 183·9 American.

“You have insisted that the incorrectness you admitted in the ‘heading of the Return of protected and unprotected trades’ could have deceived nobody?—I cannot conceive that it could.

“Is not the supposed correctness of that enumeration the main argument on which the writer of an article in the ‘Edinburgh Review’ relies for the maintenance of the position it is intended to support?—I believe it is relied on, whether as the main argument or not I will not venture to say.

“Must not then the author of that article have been misled by the inaccuracy referred to?—Most assuredly not.

“Do you happen to have seen a book published by Mr. J. L. Ricardo, entitled the ‘Anatomy of the Navigation Laws?’—Yes.

“Does it not appear that the Honourable Member in that work also treats the word ‘unprotected’ as correctly describing the trades enumerated under that head?—I have no reason to suppose that Mr. Ricardo was misled.

“In your examination on the 9th March you may recollect that much importance was attached to the distinction between steam vessels and sailing vessels employed in the trades with the near countries of the continent of Europe, and that in answer to question 132 you stated that you had ‘not’ the means of distinguishing between the one and the other. Are the Committee to infer that in giving that answer you were not

aware of the existence of the Return number 28, dated 13th December, 1847, stating the number and tonnage of British steam vessels which entered the ports of the United Kingdom from France, Holland, and Belgium in the year 1846?—If I had been aware of the existence of that Return I might not have given the answer I did.

“What is the aggregate amount of tonnage which the *Tourist*, of 112 tons, is made to represent in that Return?—6,048 tons.

“What is the tonnage of the *Magician*?—96 tons.

“What tonnage does she represent?—14,208 tons.

“What is the tonnage of the *Prince Ernest*?—145 tons.

“What amount does she represent?—24,215 tons.

“Then does it appear from that Return that 47 vessels, measuring in the aggregate 7,101 tons, are made to represent in the Custom-house Returns, in consequence of the repeated voyages being included, no less than 228,127 tons of British shipping?—It appears so from this Return.

“Are these 228,127 tons included as part of the tonnage represented in your Return of unprotected trades or British ships that entered the ports of the United Kingdom from France in the year 1846?—I take for granted they are so.

“You stated in your former examination that this Return did not include any passenger and Government steamers?—Steamers carrying only passengers*.

“Will you have the goodness to turn to that paper, and see how many vessels were actually Government steam vessels carrying passengers?—There appear to be nine.

“Will you turn to your previous answers given before this Committee, wherein you stated that vessels carrying money did not clear inwards?—Unless they had other merchandise.

“Will you read the note at the foot of that ‘Return of Steam Vessels’?—‘Vessels marked thus not Government steamers, but are included in this account in consequence of carrying horses, passengers, and bullion on board.’

“You also stated that the steamers plying between Dover and Calais were not included?—When they carried passengers only.

“Are not the steam vessels *Magician* and *Prince Ernest*, with a considerable number of others, in that Return stated to have entered inwards at Dover?—Certainly.

“Do the United States carry on foreign trade with any near countries, the repeated voyages to which could swell the amount of inward entries, as has been shown in the case of British trade with the near countries of the Continent?—I apprehend they do. There is a considerable trade carried on between the ports of the southern States of the Union and Cuba, for example, and Turk’s Island.

* See pp. 69, 70, *ante*.

“ The increase of American tonnage since 1815 has been actually greater than the increase of British tonnage in the same time?—No doubt. It is 1,032,785 British as against 1,048,874 American.

“ How do you reconcile the fact that you have just given of the increase of American shipping, which we have proved, with your previous answer, in which you state ‘ The trade and shipping of America have increased, but hitherto they have not increased in the like degree that ours has increased; our shipping has gone on increasing threefold to that of the United States of America’*?—I have compared it with the increase of the registered tonnage in America, not taking the licensed tonnage which is confined to the coasting trade. But the increase in the American tonnage, if taken from a period subsequent to 1815, will be found to be not anything so large as the increase in the British tonnage. British tonnage fell off between 1815 and a comparatively recent period, while we strictly maintained protection. It is only since our free-trade measures have been partially carried out that our commercial marine has increased, but since that time it has increased very importantly; previously to that time it was not in a state of increase, or was in a very small state of increase.

“ Will you state the actual tonnage of both nations in 1827 and 1846?—The American tonnage in 1827 was 1,620,607, and, in 1846, 2,562,034. The British tonnage in 1827 was 2,460,500, and, in 1846, 3,817,112. It should be borne in mind in a question of this kind, as it appears to me, that the increase in the British tonnage, being from a larger number than in the American, there was less room for increase on the part of England than there was on the part of America.

“ In what you have given with regard to English and American tonnage, it has been registered tonnage and not clearances?—Registered tonnage.

“ Can you give any evidence upon the number of seamen employed in each year between 1814 and 1847?—I have a statement to that effect here. I have an account of the number of men and boys usually employed in navigating vessels belonging to the British Empire in each year from 1814 to 1847, obtained from Parliamentary papers prepared in the Custom-house.

“ This Return is open to the same fallacy as the Return of the tonnage; it is not a Return of the seamen actually employed, but it gives the number of seamen who would be employed supposing the same proportion always to be borne to the number of ships upon the register?—Exactly so.

* See p. 74, *ante*.

“ An Account of the Number of Men and Boys usually employed in navigating Vessels belonging to the British Empire in each year from 1814 to 1847 :—

1814 . . .	172,786	1831 . . .	158,422
1815 . . .	177,309	1832 . . .	161,634
1816 . . .	178,820	1833 . . .	164,000
1817 . . .	171,013	1834 . . .	168,061
1818 . . .	173,609	1835 . . .	171,020
1819 . . .	174,318	1836 . . .	170,637
1820 . . .	174,514	1837 . . .	173,506
1821 . . .	169,179	1838 . . .	178,583
1822 . . .	166,333	1839 . . .	191,283
1823 . . .	165,474	1840 . . .	201,340
* 1824 . . .	168,637	1841 . . .	210,198
1825 . . .	166,183	1842 . . .	214,609
1826 . . .	167,636	1843 . . .	213,977
+ 1827 . . .	151,415	1844 . . .	216,350
1828 . . .	155,576	1845 . . .	224,900
1829 . . .	154,808	1846 . . .	229,276
1830 . . .	154,812	1847 . . .	232,890

“ Decrease between 1815 and 1824, 8,672, or 5·14 per cent.

“ Increase between 1824 and 1847, 64,253, or 38·10 per cent.

“ Increase between 1827 and 1847, 81,475, or 53·80 per cent.

“ We observe that, between the years 1838 and 1839, the proportionate increase of seamen exceeds the proportionate increase of tonnage in nearly a treble ratio. The increase of tonnage between the years 1838 and 1839 is 90,000 tons, which, at the average given by you in one of the tables of the number of men to 100 tons, would give 4,650 seamen in addition; whereas the number of additional seamen in the table which you have now put in, between 1838 and 1839, amounts to between 12,000 and 13,000?—I can only say that I have taken the figures out with great care from official documents, and am not answerable for their accuracy. It may arise from a variety of accidental circumstances. Between the years 1824 and 1846 I find that the great increase in the number of seamen employed in British shipping has been in our trade with foreign countries, and not in our colonial trade.

“ In looking to that table of protected and unprotected trades which was given in to the Committee of the House of Commons, are not those which are called the protected trades long voyages, ‘ Coast of Africa and Cape of Good Hope, St. Helena and Ascension, Mauritius, British India, British North American colonies, Australia, and the West Indies?’—Yes; but not ‘ Jersey and Guernsey.’

“ Whereas the others, which are called unprotected, are, with one or two exceptions, all short voyages?—Not so. I find

* Year of Reciprocity Treaties.

+ New Registry Act.

‘ Foreign West Indies, Sumatra, and Java, United States of America,’ the whole of ‘ South America,’ and ‘ the South Sea Islands ;’ in fact, a very large part of the table is composed of long voyages.

“ Will you have the goodness to look at the tonnage ? The great amount of tonnage is upon the short voyages ?—Russia can hardly be considered a short voyage.

“ Not as compared with the Cape of Good Hope ?—As compared with the Cape of Good Hope, yes.

“ Can you give any evidence upon the employment of British shipping in carrying between foreign ports ?—I have a statement of the number and tonnage of British ships which entered at and cleared from the principal and other European ports in the year 1846, distinguishing the direct from the carrying trade. There entered, for example, at Cronstadt, 615 British ships of 135,201 tons from British ports, and there are likewise the British ships entered at Cronstadt, not from British but from foreign ports, 56 ships of 8,641 tons. There were cleared 578 ships for British ports of 125,133 tons, and there were cleared for foreign ports 92 British ships of 18,590 tons, thus going from a foreign port to a foreign port.

“ Do you imagine that there would be any new branches of trade opened by the repeal of the Navigation Laws ?—According to the best opinion which I can form upon the subject, I should have no doubt that, although we might not open, perhaps, many new branches of trade, we should materially increase our trade. At any rate we should do this—we should prevent other countries from following our example, and enacting, as they now seem very much inclined to do, Navigation Laws, which would shut us out from a great part of the trade just alluded to.

“ What country is instituting Navigation Laws ?—Prussia has given notice to do so—not for Prussia alone, but for the whole of the German Customs Union,—and I have no doubt that other countries would follow her example.

“ Do you believe in the threat of Prussia ?—I do. With reference to the United States of America, the Navigation Law of the United States of America is one of retaliation entirely. The Navigation Law of America is very different ; that is to say, the practice of America is very different with regard to its trade with this country from what it is with regard to its trade with other countries. The United States of America treat every country as nearly as possible upon the footing of reciprocity, and have a more strict Navigation Law against England than against other countries which have not as restrictive a Navigation Law as we have against the United States of America.

“ Against what country is the Navigation Law of the United States not so strict as against England ?—It has a very different

Navigation Law as regards France and the German States from what it has with regard to England.

" Would not the reduction of the American tariff be a still stronger symptom to show reciprocity with respect to England than anything affecting shipping only?—I do not look upon it in that light. I do not look upon the tariff, provided it be adopted within the limits of what I call free trade, to be a bar at all.

" What do you consider the free-trade limit of the tariff?—I think it must depend upon the circumstances of the country. 300 per cent. might be within the limits of free trade. If it is a tariff for revenue only, it is perfectly consistent with the doctrines of free trade, even though it is 200 or 300 per cent.

" Is the American tariff founded upon the principle of revenue or protection?—It is founded, to some extent, upon the principles of protection.

" Do you think that the shipowners have gained by the reduction of duties?—The shipowner, of course, will gain by anything which encourages trade, and the shipping of the country will increase by everything that encourages trade; the more shackles you can take off from it, the more likely your shipping is to increase.

" But he may go elsewhere to build his ships?—Certainly; I have no objection to that.

" Between the years 1821 and 1844 the amount of British tonnage which entered the United States increased from 52,000 tons to 766,000. Does that tonnage include everything that enters the American ports, whether by the lakes or from the Atlantic?—I do not know.

" If it contains the repeated voyages of the steamers passing upon the American lakes, it would have the same effect in disturbing the result that the repeated voyages to Holland and France have upon the general statement of the navigation of the United Kingdom?—I have no knowledge upon the subject.

" A Return of the Transatlantic trade has been laid before the Congress, in which the figures are so very different that it must be the case that the Return alluded to in the previous questions includes the whole of the frequent voyages upon the American lakes*. With respect to the commerce of the United States, there is 'A statement showing the entries inwards and clearances outwards in the ports of the United States of American and foreign vessels from and to various countries, in the year ending 30th June, 1846'; twelve months. From England the amount is 198,000 tons only, Scotland 28,000, and Ireland 28,000. So that the whole Transatlantic British navigation with the United States would be about

* See evidence of Mr. Coulborn, *post.*

250,000 tons?—There are British ports besides those of the United Kingdom.

“ Then we find 515,000 tons stated as coming from British colonies in North America. Do you imagine that 515,000 tons can be the coasting trade between New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Canada, and the United States by sea?—There would be the West Indies.

“ The West Indies are added besides; that is 33,000?—I think it very possible. There is a very large trade carried on in bulky articles. They import a large quantity of plaster of Paris, for example.

“ It is stated that that includes the whole of the lake navigation?—I do not know. I am not aware of it.

“ You think there is no danger of competition to the British shipowner?—I do not think the British shipowner has anything to fear from competition with any nation or people under the sun. The shipping trade of this country I believe can be carried on, if you take off every restriction to-morrow, with the greatest possible prosperity as against every country under the sun.

“ Upon what do you ground that assertion?—I see that in other cases we are able to compete, and do compete successfully, against what might be supposed natural disadvantages with any country. Witness the cotton trade, where we have to pay more for the raw material than the Americans have, and we send manufactured cottons back to America. In fact, there is hardly a trade that we carry on upon any scale whatever where we do not beat every nation, and shall continue to do so.

“ Upon a comparison of some particular trade, you draw the inference that in navigation we can beat the world?—When I see that we carry on trade from foreign ports to foreign ports, in which trade we have to meet the competition of all other flags, and that we do it successfully, I cannot imagine but that we shall continue to do so. We have certainly no advantage over ships of other countries in the trade between one foreign port and another foreign port, and if we can compete with others successfully now, certainly I can see no reason why we shall not continue to do so.

“ These are opinions formed, not from any practical knowledge, but from understanding brought to bear upon that which you read and those theories with which you become acquainted?—I would not say so altogether, for I was brought up, I am happy to say, in a merchant's counting-house, and was confidentially employed in a house in a very large way of business for many years, and acquired practically an amount of commercial knowledge which I now find exceedingly useful to me in the prosecution of my public duties.

“ Were you not in trade on your own account?—I was.

“ Were you successful?—Not altogether.

" Are you able to give any statement as to the cost of ship-building in the United Kingdom and in foreign countries?—I have a statement given to me by a gentleman who is at this time building a ship at Sunderland. His name is Greenhow, and he states, in answer to some questions which I put to him, ' I was glad to receive your note, and have pleasure in answering all your queries. On account of the builder at Sunderland getting into difficulties from the stoppage of the Union Bank, the little ship has not got on so well in her building as we expected, but I have his assurance that no further delay shall occur. She will be about 180 tons, and class seven A 1, at Lloyd's. The contract is at £.10 a ton register, old measurement,' (it is by old measurement that builders, I believe, are always paid,) ' to be copper-fastened, and all fitted out complete for sea, excepting provisions, and to be brig-rigged.' That is at £.10 a ton, copper-fastened, but not copper-sheathed. I have also a statement given to me by the owner of a vessel called the *Brechin Castle*, which is classed nine years, A 1, built by Mr. Baxter, of Dundee. She is a nine A 1, 353 tons old measurement, 371 new, which is a very good ship. The date of contract was August 1844; she was ready for sea on the 1st of January, 1845. The statement which I have gives the total cost paid to the carpenter, the cost of the yellow metal—which is now used, I believe, instead of copper,—and of the outfit; the total being £.4,271, or £.12 2s. per ton; that is, copper-fastened and including yellow metal sheathing. Another vessel, the *Helena*, is a nine years old vessel, A 1; the date of the contract being January 1847, when things were dearer than they were in August 1844, when the former ship was ordered. She was ready for sea on the 1st of May, 1847. The *Helena* is 272 tons old measurement, and 270 tons new measurement. There seems to be scarcely any difference between the two. The cost of that vessel is £.3,836, or £.14 2s. per ton, sheathed with yellow metal. This is a letter which I had from Mr. Baxter, and in which he says, ' I further enclose the exact cost of two vessels contracted for by my firm; they are both nine years' vessels. The *Brechin Castle* was built under specification, and very special inspection. The *Helena* was bought on the stocks, but in every respect a first-rate vessel. The difference in price is owing to the demand for shipping in 1846 and 1847.'

" Do you know anything about the state in which foreign-built ships sometimes come over to England, to be completed or to be finished?—Yes, I have some information upon that point. This is a letter from the Collector of the Harbour Dues in Dundee. He says, ' It is common for the commanders of foreign vessels, when at this port, to add to their outfit and stores in ropes, sails, and paints, &c., but more frequently in anchors and chains; of the two last, outfits are sometimes sent

out to ports in the Baltic also. From January 1840 to December 1847 there were repaired (and many of them coppered) in the dry dock, and upon the repairing slip of the Harbour Trustees' at Dundee, ' sixty foreign vessels, amounting to 11,397 tons, occupying together 236 working days. Of the above there were eight vessels of 2,248 tons, which loaded cargoes at Memel for South America, came to Dundee and got coppered, having said cargoes on board, and then proceeded to the River Plata.'

" Have you any evidence to give upon the effect of the repeal of the Navigation Laws on our warehousing system?—I imagine that the effect upon the warehousing trade would be to increase it materially. I do not think warehousing is cheaper on the Continent; but if it were that is not the only point to be considered. If a merchant has goods of his own he likes to have them near him, and especially where there is the best market, which the English market undoubtedly is; and if he has made advances upon goods, he does not like to have them out of his own control; besides which I believe that warehouses can be built and maintained as cheaply, or more cheaply, in this country than in most others. This country is now the entrepôt of the productions which come from Asia, to a considerable extent, but not to so great an extent as it would be, I think, if our Navigation Laws were repealed. At present there are a vast number of ships coming from the West that call off certain of our ports to receive instructions as to their ultimate destination. The cargoes which they carry are, to all intents and purposes, British property; but the vessels have come here for orders, and the cargoes have gone in them to the Continent. If our Navigation Laws were altered, and those goods could be landed here, irrespectively of the flag under which they came, I have no doubt that they would be landed here instead of being sent to a foreign market.

" With respect to the warehousing of corn in a country where the frosts are very hard, and where it would be frozen, would not there be great difficulty in getting it sometimes when it was wanted during the winter?—That would sometimes occur; and I rather think that this would be the case, that where you have very hard winters you have likewise very hot summers, and a vast amount of damage arising from insects.

David Cooper Aylwin, Esq., of the firm of Aylwin and Co., in Calcutta, very extensive importers and exporters of merchandise on their own account, as well as for account of third parties, stated:—

" I received a summons to attend the Committee of the

House of Commons last year, but was not called in. The dissolution of Parliament suddenly terminated the inquiries of the Committee, and caused many witnesses, myself amongst the number, to remain unexamined. We have not had any interest in ships, either as owners or mortgagees, for the last six years; neither have we, in any way, been connected with ship-building. The decline in ship-building at the port of Calcutta has been very extensive. Between the years 1800 and 1805 the number of ships constructed in Calcutta amounted to 75, and the tonnage to 32,507 tons. In the eight years from 1806 to 1813 the number was 71, and their tonnage 33,719. Between the years 1814 and 1821 the number of vessels was 95, and the tonnage 41,686. The eight years from 1822 to 1829 furnished 61 vessels and 12,449 tons. From 1830 to 1837 the ships launched fell to 36, and their tonnage to 11,538 tons; while between 1837 and 1846 the vessels constructed do not exceed 33, and the tonnage only 10,150 tons. It will thus be perceived, that in the first 22 years of the century, the vessels constructed in the port of Calcutta amounted to 241, and the tonnage to 107,912. In the last 24 years the number of vessels amounted to only 130, and the tonnage to 34,137. The vessels of this latter period fell short of those which were built in the eight years from 1814 to 1821 by more than 7000 tons. I believe that I am correct in stating, that, with the exception of two steam-tug vessels, of small tonnage, there was not, during the last year, a single vessel built in the port of Calcutta. I attribute the decline mainly, if not altogether, to the cheaper cost of construction in this country. These vessels were chiefly built of teak-wood. I would observe, however, that some parties consider it arises from the comparative scarcity of teak timber. I do not think it can have arisen from the cheaper rate of constructing vessels at Moulmein, as the building trade of that place, for some time past, has, I believe been declining; in addition to which, nine out of ten of Moulmein-built ships have to come up to Calcutta to be re-fastened. Another reason why I scarcely think the Moulmein ship-building can have interfered with Calcutta is, that it is notorious at the present time that two or three of our largest ship-building firms have agents out in Moulmein to purchase teak timber for them, which they import into this country for the purpose of ship-building. Now, if it were cheaper to construct teak vessels at Moulmein than in England, they certainly would do so, and not import the wood as they now do into this country, for the purpose of constructing the vessels here. The freight and charges on teak timber, between Moulmein and Great Britain, amount to about £.7, or say 100 per cent. on the original value of the wood. Conveying teak timber from Moulmein to Calcutta is generally done by special agreement between the merchant and the ship, as follows: a captain of a ship who is coming up to Calcutta, engages to

take a cargo of teak timber; and in the event of its selling for any profit he is to have one-half of such profit for his freight. It would therefore be perfectly impossible to give the Committee any idea of what even the average rate of freight might be, but certainly nothing like the amount paid for its transit to England. I myself have only had one transaction in teak timber, which, as the speculation was unfortunate, and I stood in the situation of shipowner, proved very unprofitable, so far as I was concerned, as I got no freight at all. Since that time, which is about seven or eight years ago, I have personally had nothing to do with the conveyance of this description of timber. I should say most certainly that the freight and charges from Moulmein to Calcutta cannot be equal to the freight and charges from Moulmein to England. In favourable seasons, the length of the voyage from Moulmein to Calcutta is about three or four weeks, and as many months to England. The wood is generally used in Calcutta for the repair of ships, and for any purpose where wood is required which is not liable to be affected by the white ant, teak being the only wood which withstands the attack of the white ant. The total amount annually imported into Calcutta is very small indeed.

"The trade of England as regards the import trade is about 65 per cent. of the total trade of Calcutta. The exports are about 50 per cent. of the total exports from Calcutta. The country that comes next is China, which amounts to 15 per cent. The third and fourth clauses of the Navigation Laws more immediately refer to our trade with India. The fourth clause prohibits the importation of East Indian productions into this country excepting in British ships, whilst the third clause enacts that such productions shall not be imported from Europe, or any place save the port of production, into this country, to be used for consumption therein. As a merchant engaged in the constant importation and exportation of merchandise, I have during nearly a nine years' residence in India invariably found that the Navigation Laws have secured me a regular and sufficient supply of shipping, at fair and moderate rates of transit, insomuch that the rates of freight between the years 1840-41 and 1845-46 from Calcutta to Great Britain have not, even for dead or heavy weight, averaged £.4 10s. per ton, whereas light freight has been conveyed at nearly 15s. reduction. During this period the outward cost of conveying merchandise has certainly not ruled over £.1 per ton. This discrepancy between the outward and homeward rates arises from the circumstance that the exports from this country to India consist principally of metals and manufactured goods, which, although of great intrinsic value, occupy but little space in a vessel; whilst the imports we derive from India, consisting mostly of the raw material, are generally very bulky, and consequently require a greater amount of shipping. Now, when it is borne in mind

that the charges in the port of Calcutta on a vessel average 20s. per ton, it follows that the net rate of freight which the British shipowner has obtained for the homeward conveyance of our bulky Indian merchandise has barely averaged £3 10s. per ton, or 3s. 6d. per cwt.; a rate which, as a merchant, I repeat, I consider most fair and moderate, and which I certainly have no right to find fault with. The highest amount paid in these years was £6 15s. a ton; the lowest was £2 a ton. In quoting £6 15s. as the maximum, I ought to observe that the same was current in the month of July 1840, whilst the minimum of £2 a ton was for the month of August 1842. Within the last two years the homeward rates of freight have (consequent on the scarcity of food with which Providence saw it right to afflict this country) been very much enhanced at Calcutta as well as in all other parts of the world; but I should not consider it fair to accept the quotations which have been current during the last two years as at all a criterion of the general rates of freight from Calcutta to this country. My belief is, that had the prices of bread stuffs not risen in England in the manner they did, we should not, during the preceding two years, have seen the rates of freight from Calcutta to this country above £5 a ton. I need not mention that the most bulky articles shipped from India, or those which most affect the rate of freight, either to advance or otherwise, are sugar and rice. Now the exports of sugar, on account of the recent dabbling and changes there have been in the home duties, have actually declined, and not advanced; but the exports of rice, on account of the scarcity of provisions which took place in this country in 1847, increased to an amount never previously reached; insomuch that I consider the rise which has occurred in freights during the preceding eighteen months may be solely and entirely attributed to the extraordinary demand which suddenly arose for the conveyance to England of this article of food, the selling value of which, in this country, had advanced more than 100 per cent. I believe the highest homeward quotation was £10 a ton; to my knowledge, however, I can speak of £9 10s. having been paid. In the month of July 1840, the homeward rate of freight from Calcutta was £6 15s. per ton. At this time a very considerable amount of tonnage was unexpectedly required and taken up by the Government of Bengal on account of the China war."

In reply to the question—

“ Do you, as a merchant totally unconnected with shipowning or ship-building (as you are), consider the operation of the Navigation Laws to be an advantage or a disadvantage?”

Mr. Aylwin stated—

“ I consider they have operated *very much to my advantage*,

by giving me a regular and constant supply of shipping at fair and equitable rates of freight. The removal of restrictions on trade has proved as beneficial to the merchant as the infliction of unlimited competition has hitherto proved injurious; but I should say that a removal of the Navigation Laws *would not be of the slightest benefit to the merchant, as I do not consider they operate as a restriction on trade.* I presume the inference is, that if the Navigation Laws were repealed, freights would decline; because, if they did not decline, I, as a merchant, should neither be benefited nor injured by the proposed alteration. Now, as a purchaser and shipper of native produce from Calcutta, I have invariably found that whenever the homeward rate of freight has declined, the selling price of all bulky produce has immediately proportionately advanced. So far from being benefited, I, as an East Indian merchant, think it very possible I might be seriously injured by allowing foreign vessels in the case of sudden emergencies to enjoy the same privileges as British ships. At present, the British shipowner, who possesses tonnage enough for ordinary as well as extraordinary emergencies, being aware that the supply can only be derived from one source, despatches out at his own risk such amount of shipping as is considered sufficient for the probable demand; but were it competent for the foreigner to be sending out *ad libitum* any amount of tonnage (of which the British shipowner would know nothing, as the same would not be confined to one or two countries, but might be from every port in Europe and America), I consider no prudent British shipowner would be willing to run the risk of despatching his vessel on speculation, on so long a voyage as to Calcutta, in order to meet an extraordinary but perhaps temporary emergency. Whence I conclude that it would not be advantageous to allow the foreigner to enjoy the privileges of a British ship, even in cases of temporary emergency, as it would most assuredly endanger our present certain supply of British, without in any degree guaranteeing a sufficiency of foreign shipping. It would take as long for the foreigner as for the British ship to arrive in Calcutta. Foreign shipping is not now available in the Eastern seas, with the exception of an occasional American ship. In the year 1830-1 the British imports into Calcutta, amounted to 103,220 tons; in 1835-6, to 121,712 tons; in 1840-1, to 204,227 tons; and, in 1845-6, to 286,024 tons. The foreign imports in the years 1830-1 amounted to 20,432 tons; in 1835-6, to 28,385 tons; in 1840-1, to 30,089 tons; and, in 1845-6, to 33,791 tons; out of which we may take an average of about 8000 tons as coming from France. The trade of France with India, I may remark, is different from the trade of any other Continental power; this arises from the French having formerly had, and even now holding, possessions in different parts of India. Portuguese ships have not entered the port of

Calcutta for many years past. There was one Genoese ship in the year 1840-1, of 277 tons; otherwise we have had none from Genoa. An American ship is enabled to take out British goods from the United Kingdom to Calcutta, but not to take a cargo from Calcutta to a British port in China."

In reply to the question—

" You seem to apprehend that the only effect contemplated by the repeal of the Navigation Laws would be the lowering of freight; but might it not also open new branches of commerce; might it not, provided other countries also repealed their restrictions on navigation; for instance, enable British ships to take Calcutta goods or Chinese goods to the United States?"

Mr. Aylwin answered—

" I think we have no right to arrive at that inference, and for this reason: that Continental as well as American ships are manned and sailed cheaper than British ships; in proof of which, I would submit to the Committee the fact, that, since the various treaties of reciprocity which this country has opened with foreign powers, there has not, I believe, been one single exception where British shipping has not declined and foreign shipping advanced, or where they have not advanced in a greater ratio than our shipping has*; whence, as a merchant, I consider I am justified in asserting that foreigners can sail their ships at a cheaper rate than we can. I consider that, were the Navigation Laws repealed, the foreigner, on this account, would entirely supersede the British shipowner. I am prepared to state that, for the last eight or nine years, I could have effected charters of foreign vessels at about 15s. to 20s. under the rates current for British ships during the same period. I have had vessels offered me from Hamburg and Antwerp on more than one occasion.

" Were we to abolish the Navigation Laws, we should not only allow European and American vessels to enter into competition with our own shipping in the long voyage between England and India, but should open the door to Arabs and other Eastern shipping. Now, although the Arab vessels are generally very inferior and unfitted for the voyage, I have known them perfectly adapted for the conveyance of cargoes from India to England; and I have no hesitation in saying that you could get these vessels at any time for £3 a ton—a rate at which no British vessel could possibly bring home a cargo, and yield a profit to her owners. But, as a merchant, I do not think I should be benefited by lower freights, as the reduction which would ensue from allowing foreign ships to come into competition with British would be so small a per-centaige on the value of the merchandise, that I think no benefit would accrue either to the merchant

* See p. 97.

of India, or the consumer or manufacturer of this country, but would go entirely into the hands of the middle-man or native salesman in Calcutta. *I have, as I before said, invariably found that whenever the rate of freight from Calcutta to Great Britain has declined, the selling value of all bulky merchandise has advanced in a similar ratio.* I believe there are no shrewder or better merchants in existence than the Hindoo salesmen of Calcutta. These men are in constant correspondence with brokers and mercantile houses in England, and by every overland mail are duly advised of the selling prices of produce in England. Now, if we take as an example the case of a Hindoo engaged in the selling or shipping of rice, who has learned, by the overland mail from his London agents, that this grain was worth £.12 a ton in England, he, knowing that the freight from Calcutta to convey his rice to England at the receipt of such advices is £.4 a ton, and that the intermediate charges amount to, say £.2 a ton, or, in all, £.6 a ton, is perfectly aware and fully alive to the fact that he ought to get (and will get) £.6 a ton for his rice; for if he does not get it in India, he will ship the rice on his own account, and get his price in England, it being a matter of indifference to him whether he get the £.6 per ton for his rice in Calcutta or London, as, from the facilities which the East India Company as well as the other agency houses in Calcutta are willing to afford shippers of goods, by making advances on produce consigned to this country for sale, it is competent for the Hindoo rice-seller to get his money in Calcutta to nearly the full extent of the value of his shipments. If, therefore, freights fall down to £.2 a ton, he immediately advances the value of his grain in the same way as, if they advanced to £.5 a ton, he is compelled to demand a proportionately lower selling rate. I think that, were we accustomed in the Calcutta market to have great and sudden fluctuations in freight, on account of an irregular or deficient supply of vessels, the effects thereof to the merchants would be most injurious, as it is only to a certain extent that the selling-price of produce can be influenced by any rise or fall in freights. I feel confident any East Indian merchant would rather pay on the average 10s. to 20s. per ton more for the conveyance of his goods, if it secured him a constant and steady supply of shipping, and, consequently, little fluctuations in the homeward rates of freight, than be exposed to the risk, immediately he has entered into an operation, that an unexpected supply of foreign shipping should suddenly, although but temporarily, lower the rates, and so, by inducing shipments of the same bulky commodity he has been speculating in, jeopardise the success of his operation. At the present time the Calcutta trade is partly carried on by a class of vessels which are exclusively engaged in it; which regularly make their voyages to and fro, and are not tempted by any circumstances to be with-

drawn into any other trades. The admission of foreigners would entirely drive this class of shipping away; and until a set of owners had arisen on the Continent, who entered into the trade in a similar manner, we could not for some time have as regular a supply as we have now; but were the Navigation Laws repealed, I think it is very probable that in six years' time we should have called into existence a foreign mercantile navy, quite competent to convey as many goods as we have for shipment from India at from 10s. to 20s. under what they now can be conveyed at.

“ But the foreigner would only send his ships out to Calcutta at such times as he thought he could obtain a more profitable voyage than in other directions. He would not, like Messrs. Wigram and Co., Messrs. Green and Co., Messrs. T. and W. Smith and Co., and other houses, send his ships to Calcutta when prospects for homeward rates were bad equally as when they were good. The foreigner would only look to the profit he could make on each individual transaction, and, not like the above-mentioned firms, look to the result of an average series of years and voyages; whence it follows, that if the foreigner thought he could earn more by his ship going to any other part of the world he would send his ship there and not to Calcutta; the consequence of which would be, that the regular Indian traders being displaced, and no similar class of vessels called into existence to fill up the vacuum, our supply of tonnage must be more precarious, and our rates of freight consequently more fluctuating than they now are. Messrs. Wigram, Messrs. Green, and others, work upon the average of a series of voyages, and not upon one single transaction, as would necessarily be the case with the foreigner. To do this requires the most unlimited confidence, founded on an intimate knowledge of the trade you are engaged in, and also the greatest enterprise, and, I may add, enormous capital, to prosecute a losing trade, as these ship-owners I just mentioned have frequently done, in hopes of and until better times come round and compensate them for the temporary losses they have incurred.”

With reference to the question of Lascars being made British seamen, Mr. Aylwin said—

“ About six years ago I was an owner of several Lascar-manned vessels. In a warm country they are very far preferable to Europeans, but they are totally unfitted to meet a cold climate. In my mind it is perfectly evident why the various enactments have been made with respect to Lascars. It could not have been for the protection of British seamen, because, had such been the object of the Legislature, they would have passed similar enactments as regards the Kroomen of Africa, the inhabitants of South Australia, the Negroes of the West Indies, and, in fact,

all other colonial subjects. But the laws affecting the Lascars, I presume, were passed in that spirit of humanity and consideration which has always distinguished the British Legislature when framing enactments for the natives of India, and were passed in order to prevent their being brought to a climate so unfitted to their constitution as this climate has invariably proved to them. Before the Charter was repealed, the East India Company were in the habit of bringing to England a great many Lascars; but whereas the East India Company could not, for very shame, import human beings into a strange country and then leave them like dogs to die in the streets, it did not necessarily follow that every private individual would prove equally sensitive; whence it became the duty of the Legislature to protect a class of their subjects who could not protect themselves. The Act excluding the Lascar from the privileges of a British seaman is the 4th Geo. IV., cap. 80.

“ Supposing the Navigation Laws were repealed in reference to the Lascar, and he was placed on the same footing as a British seaman, when he arrived in this country, having brought home a ship, he would be discharged and become a burden upon the charity of this country. There can be no doubt, if public or private charity did not come to his aid, he would starve and die in the streets. Under the present state of things, when Lascars are brought here they are obliged to be shipped back again. No doubt the humanity of the Legislature would lead it to enact some protective law, whereby the Lascars could be met and carried back to their own country, in the event of the Navigation Laws being repealed; but I would respectfully yet firmly suggest, that, instead of dabbling in fresh laws, the Imperial Legislature might do worse than by letting the old laws, of which nobody complains, remain.

“ There exists an opinion that what are termed country-built ships are under some disadvantages as compared with British vessels. Now I beg to state that a country-built ship is, in every respect, in the same position, as regards an English voyage, as a British-built ship. But one reason why country-built ships so seldom arrive in this country is because, being built of teak (a very heavy and durable wood) they are peculiarly adapted for the climate and excessive heat of the Eastern seas; but, from its not being a buoyant wood in the water, they are not generally good carriers, which, in the long homeward voyage, is a great desideratum in a vessel. When, however, a country-built ship, on account of an extraordinary high rate of homeward or temporary depression of local freights, wants to come to England, she is precisely on the same footing as an English ship which had been, we will say, in the Mauritius trade, and had shipped a Lascar crew. She must first endeavour to obtain an European crew; but, failing that, she is allowed, after the captain has obtained the necessary certificates, to ship

Lascars. In reality, however, there is no such very great difference to a ship, whether she brings Lascars home, or whether she does not, as, if a vessel has to engage a fresh European crew at Calcutta, she generally has to pay from 50 to 70 per cent. more wages to such seamen than are current in this country, on account of the crimping system carried on in Calcutta. A Lascar-manned vessel, on her return to India, is forced to take out four British seamen for every 100 tons, presuming she takes back her Lascar crew. The consequence is, that a vessel of 500 tons has to take out 20 British seamen as far as the Cape of Good Hope (because directly the ship gets eastward of the Cape of Good Hope, she can then be manned solely by Lascars); and this is the only disadvantage which a ship, whether British or country-built, coming home with Lascars, labours under. The expenses attendant on the additional 20 British seamen for three months at £2 5s. per head, in all £.45 per month, amounts to £.135 in a ship of 500 tons; or, presuming she will carry 700 tons of merchandise, becomes a tax on her homeward cargo of *not 4s. a ton.*

“ Supposing the repeal of the Navigation Law to place East India production, say 15s. per ton, more cheaply laid in down England, I do not consider it would cause any increased consumption of sugar, or that it would be sold at a cheaper retail rate. Fifteen shillings per ton not being one-third of a farthing per pound, I cannot imagine that the slightest benefit could, under any circumstances, accrue to the consumer by so ridiculous a reduction; although, as I before stated, I feel confident that such reduction on the average freights current since 1840-41 would be sufficient to drive the British shipowner from prosecuting the voyage to India. I consider that the Navigation Laws were framed to acquire that which they have obtained for us, viz. the entire carrying trade for the continent of Europe of all East Indian productions. If, however, we were to allow foreign vessels to import East Indian cargoes into the Continent, whence they might subsequently, either in part or whole, be re-exported for consumption in England, I consider that not only should we lose our Continental carrying trade, but that we should also, in many instances, be compelled to draw a portion of our supplies from the continent of Europe. The price of all Indian articles during the last 25 years has (with the exception of indigo in 1824) ruled higher on the Continent than in England. Now, were the foreign shipowner or merchant allowed, when he imported a cargo of saltpetre, sugar, or rice, to select such quality and quantity as his market at the time of arrival might require, and possess the power of re-shipping the surplus to this country, there can be no doubt but he would invariably import his own requirements direct from India, and so save the intermediate charges which accrue between this country and the Continent, and which he now has to pay to the

British shipowner and merchant. Take the article of rice. The first cost in India is, say £.5 a ton ; the charges for shipment, insurance, commission, &c., £.2; and the freight by a British vessel, £.5 a ton ; thereby making the cost of rice, laid down in England to the British consumer, £.12 a ton. The foreigner now has to purchase his rice of us at £.12 a ton, and afterwards must incur the extra costs that accrue upon import and export, which may be estimated at £.2 a ton ; so that while our rice costs £.12 a ton, he is consuming a similar article at £.14 a ton. But if the foreigner could buy his rice at Calcutta at £.5 a ton, he would, with the intermediate charges between Calcutta and Europe, and which I have calculated at £.2 per ton, be enabled (supposing his freight homewards stood him in, by his own vessel, £.4 per ton) to lay down the rice in his own country at £.11 per ton, or £.3 per ton less than he now has to pay. But in the event of the repeal of the Navigation Laws, there would be nothing (as foreign vessels can be sailed cheaper than our own shipping) to prevent the foreigner from furnishing us with our supplies, and so possessing the carrying trade of this country in the same manner as we now enjoy that of his. At any rate if the foreigner could import his rice direct (and other articles in proportion) at £.11 per ton, it would be madness to suppose, in the event of the repeal of the Navigation Laws, that we who cannot furnish him *via* England with this grain under £.14 per ton, could hope to retain in our hands that which it was the study and pride of our ancestors to obtain for us—I mean the carrying trade of the Continent. Computing, however, the annual amount of registered tonnage employed in the Calcutta branch of our trade at 125,000 tons, representing 170,000 tons of burden, for the conveyance of which the British shipowner requires a freight at the rate of £.5 10s. for the round, whereas the foreigner would be repaid by having £4. 10s., it follows, *prima facie*, that this country is paying the difference between what the foreign and the British vessels can carry the goods at (say 20s. per ton) for the maintenance and support of the Navigation Laws. But when we consider that the whole of the £.935,000 which this country pays the British shipowner for the conveyance of our East Indian productions from Calcutta is spent and circulated amongst operatives, seamen, and other labouring classes in England, to the benefit of our manufacturers, agriculturists, and the mercantile community at large ; whereas, on the contrary, every penny of the £.765,000 which the foreigner would receive would be abstracted from the wealth or circulation of Great Britain ; I think I may safely assert that the maintenance of the Navigation Laws is a great national question, tending as much to the interest and advantage of the agriculturist and manufacturer as ever it can be to the merchant or the shipowner. Let us, however, regard the maintenance or repeal of the Navigation Laws purely in a debtor and creditor

point of view. It appears that these laws ensure us, as before said, the carrying trade of the Continent for all East Indian productions, but that were they repealed we should immediately lose this branch of trade, which we will estimate at 40,000 tons per annum. We, therefore, have left for own home consumption 135,000 tons of Calcutta productions, on which it appears we are paying £.1 per ton, or £.135,000 (from our right into our left hand pocket) in order to uphold these laws. Let us repeal the Navigation Laws, and what is the consequence? Why, that we certainly effect a nominal saving of this £.135,000, but on account of our losing the Continental carrying trade of 40,000 tons, which, at a freight of £.4 10s. per ton, is annually yielding us £.180,000, we are actually, when we strike the balance, losers, in a mercantile point of view, of no less than £.45,000 per annum. In this calculation I do not take into account the many collateral benefits England further derives in the shape of warehousing, insurances, commissions, &c. &c.

“ We have, under the Navigation Laws, as far as regards India, everything. What can we want more? Navigation being the child of commerce, if the repeal of the Navigation Laws placed at our disposal the mercantile marine of the whole world, we should not increase our exports a bale or our imports a case thereby; nor should we lay down articles of produce at a cheaper rate to our home consumers. We have the whole trade in our hands, and I am at a loss to understand what we promise ourselves by an alteration. As a mercantile nation, we should have specific personal advantage in view, as I very much question whether Continental nations, made up of fraternity, will give England credit for philanthropy in any alteration we may choose to make in our Navigation Laws. *My individual opinion is, that by any alteration or modification of the Navigation Laws, WE HAVE MUCH TO LOSE, BUT NOTHING TO GAIN.* I consider the Navigation Laws are as much for the benefit of the British manufacturer as they are for the protection of the British shipowner.”

With reference to a local Act, lately passed by the Governor-General of India, touching the importation and exportation of merchandise in foreign and British bottoms, Mr. Aylwin said—

“ I have a copy of the Act in my hand, which was most unexpectedly passed without any consultation with the mercantile community in Calcutta, and came overland about three weeks ago. The Act states, ‘ It is hereby enacted, that from and after the 25th day of March, 1848, all goods imported on foreign bottoms, into any port of the Presidencies of Fort William, in Bengal, Fort St. George, or Bombay, shall be charged only

with the same rates of duty as such goods would now by law be charged with if such goods were imported into any of the said ports on British bottoms, anything in the Act of the Council of India contained to the contrary notwithstanding. And it is hereby enacted, that from and after the said day all goods exported on foreign bottoms, by sea, from any of the said Presidencies, shall be charged only with the same rates of duty as such goods would now by law be charged with if such goods were exported from any of the said ports on British bottoms, anything in any Act of the Council of India contained to the contrary notwithstanding.' In other words, there is an equalization of the differential duties charged on goods imported or exported in British and in foreign bottoms into or from India. I am of opinion that a more ill-advised Act never was passed ; as for every foreign ship that enters the port of Calcutta, and brings or takes away a cargo, there will necessarily be one English vessel the less. Who will this Act benefit? Will it benefit the native of India? Will it benefit the British merchant, manufacturer, shipowner, underwriter, or consumer? Will it cause one extra ounce of produce to be exported from Calcutta than was the case when the same was entirely conveyed by British shipping? In short, who but the foreign merchant and foreign shipowner will be benefited by this unasked-for concession of the Government of India? As an English merchant, I must declare that this legislating for foreigners is, in my eyes, as Quixotic as it is impolitic. Our coasting as well as our carrying trade is affected thereby, because a foreign vessel can now go to Calcutta and can load back for the Continent. Previously to passing this Act, there was a differential duty both on exports and imports. Sugar and rum were free by a British ship; but in a foreign ship, 3 per cent. was levied upon them : that is now abolished.

" I believe it was stated in evidence before a Committee of the House of Commons, by Mr. Brown, that the Navigation Laws affected country-built and Lascar-manned ships, and excluded them from the home voyage. I think I have quite sufficiently stated to the Committee that such is not the case ; and, if I saw the evidence, I should be prepared to show where Mr. Brown was mistaken. His views are entirely erroneous from first to last.

Mr. Aylwin, in order to justify his opinion with regard to the effects of the Reciprocity Acts upon British shipping, again appeared before the Committee on the 19th May, and submitted the following tabular statement, compiled from Returns laid before the House of Commons, showing the effects of the treaties as regards shipping :

	Tons.	Tons.
The first treaty concluded was with Prussia, and bears date 2nd April, 1824, in which year the tonnage of shipping entered inwards was	British.	Prussian.
In the year 1845 it was	94,664 49,334	151,621 256,611
Showing a decrease in British tonnage of And an increase in Prussian tonnage of	45,380	104,990
In May 1845, Swedish ships were placed in reciprocity, and the tonnage entered inwards in that year from Sweden and Norway was	British.	Sweden and Norway.
In 1845 it was	28,493 16,372	175,364 210,820
Showing a decrease of British tonnage of But an increase of Swedish and Norwegian tonnage of . . . . .	. . . . .	12,121
On the 16th June, 1824, a Reciprocity Treaty was concluded with Denmark, in which year the inward entries were	British.	Danish.
In 1845 they were	6798 4528	23,689 84,566
Showing a decrease in British tonnage of But an increase in Danish tonnage of . . . . .	. . . . .	2210
The Reciprocity Treaty with the United States was concluded in 1827, when the inward entries were	British.	American.
In 1845 they were	73,204 223,676	217,535 444,442
Showing an increase of	150,472	226,907
No Reciprocity Treaty was concluded with Russia until 1843, in which year the inward entries stood thus	British.	Russian.
In 1845 they were	314,682 380,864	47,883 75,678
Showing an increase of	66,182 on 314,000	27,795 on 47,000

. The trade with France being made up of steamers and coasting vessels, who each perform from 20 to 120 voyages a year, no result can be arrived at of the actual amount of tonnage with this country. The same observation will apply to Belgium, Holland, and the Germanic States.

Gustav Godeffroy, Esq., belonging to the house of John Cæsar Godeffroy and Son, in Hamburg, stated:—

“ I am a native of Hamburg. We trade to various countries, but principally to the west coast of South America, and are beginning to trade to South Australia. We own, including those building, 14 ships, amounting in all to about 7000 tons. Since I have been in business we have built vessels at Bremen, in Sweden especially, also at Hamburg ; of those the Hamburg vessels are the most expensive, but experience has taught us that the most expensive ships on the whole, although they may cost more at the beginning, will be the cheaper ships in the long run. I have never built ships in England. From all that I have been able to ascertain I believe that A 1 ships can be built just as cheaply in Sunderland or in Scotland as the same class of ship can be built in Hamburg. I speak from experience when I speak of Stockholm. One vessel we have built in Stockholm, and we are building a second now. They are, however, not equal to the A 1 ships, because it is quite impossible to build an oak ship in Stockholm. We are going to send over some pieces of wood to form the kelson of a vessel that is now building for our account in Sweden. I always would give the preference to an oak-built ship. The material in England, owing to the facility of getting it from every part, is very great, and I consider it so superior that I do not believe better or even equal ships can be built anywhere. You have the live oak here, and African oak and teak ; you get the pitch pine, and, in fact, every wood that is possibly wanted. The ships I am building at Stockholm are of pine and oak. There is timber which we wish to send from Hamburg. It comes down the river Elbe in rafts from Silesia and all the countries bordering on the Elbe ; it is very good oak, but I consider the live oak in England not by any means so liable to the dry rot as our oak is on the Continent. Anchors and chains we always write for from England ; besides that we get the copper or the Muntz-metal sheathing and copper bolts. We get chronometers, windlasses, apparatus for pumping up the anchors, the charts, and a good many articles of minor importance from England. The sails we make in Hamburg ; the linen used for sail-cloths is generally made in Prussia. I have seen some very good samples of sailcloth from Belgium. Building ships for foreigners in England, in case the Navigation Laws were razed, would be a very eminent means of profit ; they would be built under the inspection of Lloyd's agent ; they would by that be much more easily classed at Lloyd's than the foreign vessels are now.”

Being reminded that there was no law in this country

that prevented his building a ship here if he pleased, Mr. Godeffroy said—

“ There is the objection of the want of personal supervision ; that would always with me materially influence the place which I selected for building a ship. If I could reside at the spot myself I would willingly build the ship there, because even if I had a most intelligent captain or other person to superintend the building, nevertheless there are so many questions which always arise upon which they are obliged to take advice from the owner, that writing is very tedious ; we have found that out with the ships which we have been building in Sweden. Every post there was a memorandum from the captain, how shall this and how shall that be done ? That could be very easily avoided if I were at the spot. Besides that, at the place where I reside the tradesmen all know me well ; the carpenter knows me, the other people that furnish my vessel know me, and they know that if they treat me well I will be their customer again. Therefore if I reside at the place I am sure of getting a good article. If the repeal of the Navigation Laws were to take place we should sail the ship most probably under our flag. However, I do not see any objection why we should not sail her then under the British flag, because we have always much more protection from the English flag than from our own flag, which is no protection at all. I mean by ‘ protection ’ a man-of-war. With the Danes we were formerly exposed.”

Mr. Godeffroy was asked—

“ Why do you now prefer building at Hamburg, which is the dearer port, to building at Sunderland, which is the cheaper port ?”—

To which he replied—

“ Because I am a resident at Hamburg, and it would put me to great inconvenience to be in Sunderland during the building of the ship ; in fact, I could not leave Hamburg for the length of time that the ship would be building.”

He was next questioned—

“ Then why would you do it after the change of the Navigation Law ; if the Navigation Law were changed, would you leave Hamburg to come and superintend the building of the vessel ?”—

And answered—

“ That is a question which I cannot now decide ; perhaps I might, perhaps I might not. I am a Free-Trader. I would go to the cheapest market and sell to the dearest, and if a mer-

chant did not do so he would not be a good merchant. But to return once more to that question which has been put about Sunderland, and why I do not build ships there, and so on. I say when the case arises then I will maturely reflect upon it ; I will weigh with one hand the advantages of a ship built in England, the classification at Lloyd's, and other important circumstances, always considering the price to be the same, I will not say cheaper, then I will weigh with the other hand my personal supervision, and decide it ; but to decide that question now is impossible for me. It would make a considerable item in my account, the power, I being a foreigner, of bringing my goods directly to England, most undoubtedly."

In answer to the question—

“ Then, on the other hand, will you have the goodness to show us Englishmen the advantage which we are to derive from the repeal of the Navigation Laws ?”—

He said—

“ I must decline answering that question. Allow me to point out one or two items. One is, that there is a national meeting in Frankfort now, and the feeling in general is to unite all the Customs in one ; to do away with all internal and river duties, and to bring all the German ships under one flag. There has been a Committee appointed by the National Assembly in Frankfort to investigate the matter of the Customs, and of the trade and navigation. From what I hear, this Committee is composed of 30 members, of whom I believe three-fourths are what we call in Germany Protectionists, who belong to the Southern States, and I believe only one-fourth Free-Traders. It is very much to be feared that proposals will be made, and most probably also carried into execution, to retaliate upon vessels of those nations that do not grant to our vessels the same rights in their ports as we grant to their vessels in our ports. In Hamburg there is a good example of it. The navigation is closed during three or four months in the year ; there are sand-banks which impede large ships going up with their full cargo to Hamburg, so that they are obliged to be lightened in the river. Hamburg is pressed, first by the Zollverein, then by the various duties of other countries. Our ships are nowhere, except in America, Chili, Peru, and perhaps one other country, admitted upon the same footing as we admit the shipping of every country in our port ; and, nevertheless, the trade in general has been going on gradually increasing every year, and also there has been an increase in the shipping. The Committee of which I have spoken is formed of a majority of differential-duty men, under the idea that they will force, for instance, Spain and Holland to admit, and, perhaps, also retaliate upon England in

case they do not admit, our ships on the same footing as we do theirs. That Committee has been appointed by the National Parliament in Frankfort to investigate the matter, and they take evidence just as it was taken here last year before the House of Commons; then they will decide; and I repeat that, from the general feeling prevailing in Germany, it is feared that retaliatory measures will be taken. In Hamburg the number of ships that enter the port inwards coming from sea, not the river ships, is very nearly 4,000; of those 4,000 there are 1,000 British ships, that is 25 per cent.; it is better than 25 per cent., the numbers are 3,700 and 990, so that it is more than 25 per cent. Oldenburg, Hanover, Lubeck, Bremen, and Holstein have not joined the Zollverein, I suppose, because they considered it for their interest not to do it. We have been chartering foreign vessels at a less freight than English vessels obtain for bringing home our copper ore. If the Navigation Laws are repealed, the freights for the foreign ships will be equal to the freights for English vessels from the west coast of South America, and I should be obliged to pay more freight upon the copper ore then than I am paying now; therefore I believe that I am speaking against my own interest in giving this evidence. The Company for smelting ore in Hamburg has been about a year in existence. I was on the west coast of South America myself. The firm to which I belong had been trading to that coast for some time. I always had several of our own vessels at my disposal, for which I was to procure a return freight; but I could not get any, because of my ships being excluded from the English ports. That gave rise to my speculating. I may say, that, had the Navigation Laws not excluded our ships from enjoying the freights which are current on the west coast, I for my own part most undoubtedly never would have thought of erecting a smelting establishment in Hamburg.

" A Hamburg-built ship and an English-built ship are about the same cost and goodness. There is one thing which I would mention; I can buy any ship I like—for instance, I have bought American vessels and Swedish vessels; I have bought also an English ship, and I know that several English-built ships are owned in Hamburg—and there is no difficulty whatever in immediately procuring the Hamburg flag for it. In order to carry the Hamburg flag the owner must be a Hamburg citizen, and the captain likewise; the crew may be of any nation whatever. The wages vary a little; at the present moment they are £.1 12s. for an able seaman. Young sailors, or half sailors, would be £.1. 1s. 6d. I have seen the wages a trifle lower, but I have seen them also higher, according to the number of ships that there are which want men. I give the preference to the people from Hamburg, being from Hamburg myself, because I wish to raise that kind of industry among

them ; but we have Prussians ; we have a great many Danes and Russians ; also some Englishmen sometimes, not often ; they generally serve on board of the English ships. There is no statutory regulation which obliges me to take apprentices, but I find it an advantage to take them. In that way we get people born in Hamburg for our captains. Formerly, they only sent the boys to sea that were not good for anything else. Our mates have to undergo a pretty severe examination before they are promoted ; afterwards it is not necessary. That is a State rule. Whoever wishes to serve as mate on board a ship must have a certificate from the Navigation School. The examination is made by the schoolmaster, who is appointed by the State, and two old captains, and the examination is pretty rigorous.

" Our ships now sometimes wait at Cowes. For instance, when it is winter in Hamburg, and the river navigation is closed, our vessels call at some port in England, and stop there until it is re-opened. If the Navigation Laws were razed, I would with the greatest pleasure sell my cargo in England, fit my ship out and send her away again, because by that I should derive a great benefit. I am expecting cargoes of copper ore within the next two months, and I should be very happy indeed, if the Navigation Laws were razed, and if this present state of war continues, to sell them in England. I cannot say foreigners would take commodities from England in exchange for their produce.

" The trade is very great as to warehousing in Germany. I do not believe that even if it were much cheaper that difference ever would be equal to the risk run by the owner of the cargo of leaving it there, perhaps, during four months, with the impossibility of re-exporting it ; he would be reduced to sell it for consumption in Germany, or wait until the four months had expired. I have known instances of some of our ships which have been 24 days before they could reach the Channel from Hamburg. Then the position of England is so central, that I know instances in which our large sugar-refiners have gone over from Prussia to London, and have bought their cargoes afloat in Cowes, and have directed where they wished to send them. Now for my own part, and I believe a great many would follow that plan, in case the Navigation Laws were razed, I would most decidedly avail myself of the liberty of calling at an English outport, for it could be done without great expense ; England is in my way, I must always pass through the Channel, and the captain would receive orders where to go. I would sell my cargo at the best market ; and if England offered me the best market, I would sell it in England rather than have the voyage to Hamburg, which is sometimes a very tedious one. My firm conviction is, that the trade would be much larger even than it is now, because all the ships would

call at Cowes for orders, and be sold in fact in England. I remember that the house of Moon there once shipped a large quantity of coffee, the greater part of which was loaded in foreign ships to Cowes for orders. When those cargoes arrive here, the owners can only consult the advantage between the different Continental markets; the English market cannot come into competition at all, because it is a foreign ship, and it is not admitted. Of this I can state a great many instances; this one of Messrs. Moon happened when I was in Rio de Janeiro myself, therefore I know it. I think it would induce a greater amount of produce to be brought to England upon the chance of sale. I would willingly send over a great many articles from Hamburg. I can name the instance of nitrate of soda; that would be not a single article, but a whole cargo. I am entirely precluded from it by the Navigation Laws now. From the central position of England, and the ports being always open, the warehousing system could not be in the slightest degree injured by the repeal of the Navigation Laws. There is another article, Alpaca wool. We were the importers of several large quantities of Alpaca wool into Hamburg; we could have realized a much better price in England. We tried very hard to get them into England, but there was no possibility, and we were obliged to sell it at less price in Hamburg; a great part went into the interior. It would have been bought in England; at that time the price of it in England was very high."

John Diston Powles, Esq., a London merchant, and Secretary of the London Docks, stated:—

"I am acquainted with the general provisions and operation of the Navigation Laws. The third clause in the Navigation Act prohibits the importation of the goods of Asia, Africa, and America from any port of Europe. I think the effect of that enactment is, to cause goods to be deposited in this country preferably to the continent of Europe. If parties abroad were allowed to send their goods to Europe, say to Belgium, Holland, and so on, and were permitted at any time to introduce them subsequently into this country, they would in a great many cases, I have no doubt, prefer to do so. At present, the policy of the importers of goods is, to employ British ships to bring it to this country, because they have always open to them the market of this country for home consumption, and the resource of the Continent. I will put a case: I am about to import a cargo of produce from some port of Asia, Africa, or America, and to bring it here to find the best market I can for it. I know that if I bring it in a foreign ship I can only sell it for exportation; but if I bring it in a British ship I have the choice of

the English market, and of the whole Continent too ; and the same sort of reasoning would lead a person in a foreign country to act in the same way. I have not a doubt that foreigners bring produce from the countries I have named to this country in British ships for the purpose of first trying this country, and of subsequently exporting it. It is a case of every-day occurrence. If not restricted to the use of British ships, foreigners would of course employ any ships they thought proper ; they would send them to Belgium, Holland, or anywhere they pleased ; and they could introduce the goods into this country as it suited them. The consequence would be that we should get nothing but just our portion of the short trade between England and the continent of Europe. The direct trade would be lost to us ; I do not mean altogether, but that preference which we now command would be gone. The productions of those parts of the globe are brought to our principal ports, London, Liverpool, Bristol, Glasgow, etc., and thence distributed to the small towns in the country here, and to the continent of Europe, as the market may require. The facility of bonding is very much extended now. You could as easily supply the small out-ports of England from Rotterdam as from London. I dare say the charges for freight are pretty much the same from Rotterdam to many ports of England, as from London to those ports. There is no doubt at all that the warehousing charges at Rotterdam and the near ports of the Continent are considerably lower than in England. There is hardly any operation that is not carried on at a cheaper rate on the Continent than in London. Labour and everything is lower. Goods are deposited with perfect safety in Holland and Belgium, and were in France also, previously to the late political troubles. There is no question of danger, I apprehend. I think there can be no doubt that if such were to be permitted, Continental merchants would avail themselves of the liberty of shipping the imports for the consumption of their respective countries, and re-exporting the surplus to the British market. It seems to me that such a change, without doing us any good in any way whatever, would have a direct tendency to take business away from us.

" There was an attempt made a little while ago to introduce Manilla hemp into this country from Spain, but which, owing to the proper vigilance of the Customs, failed. Supposing it had been allowed to come into this country as Spanish hemp, the parties now engaged in importing hemp from Manilla would put an end to their orders, and we should lose the direct trade. I know that one party stated, ' If this can come from Spain I can import it no longer.' The freight from Manilla to Spain is not a matter that comes before us in England. No question but it forms part of the price of the hemp ; but that party might bring it in a Spanish ship to Spain, and we should just simply get the advantage of importing it from Spain here. The pro-

bility is, I think, that the expense would be greater in bringing it first from Manilla to Spain, and then from Spain to England; but the circuitous route would supersede the direct route, because the importer in this country, knowing that it can only come in British ships, and being aware of the state of the trade, regulates accordingly; but the moment he found it could be admitted from Spain, he would say at once, 'There is an end of my business; *the market only requires a certain quantity*; and if it can come from Spain I shall cease my imports.' Manilla is a great deal more connected with Spain than with us; and I think the probability is, seeing the every-day course of trade, that if that business could be done through Spain, our English merchants would lose it. The difference in freight might be 10s. a ton. The Navigation Laws do not at all interfere with bringing it in a direct voyage in British ships, and, therefore, how we could by possibility be in any better position by abrogating that law, and allowing it to come to us circuitously through Spain, is what I, as a merchant, cannot find out. There is very little intercourse between us and Manilla. Their hemp is an article which we consume, and, I have no doubt, from the constant intercourse there is between Spain and Manilla, they would be constantly getting their hemp there, and sending it to us. Where there is only direct intercourse between two places a transaction can be reckoned upon to a certain degree, so that the merchant has some degree of confidence in issuing his orders; but if there is the power of supplying the market from three or four different sources, he would have less confidence, not knowing what quantity of the article might be brought in. We get our supplies with great facility from all parts of the world; they are never impeded from any want of British shipping to bring it.

"It is sometimes a great disadvantage to the merchant of England to have goods brought here that he has no reason to calculate upon. Within the last few weeks, to the surprise of all of us in the city, it was stated as a grievance that certain cargoes of cotton which were turned aside from Havre because of the troubled state of France could not be brought into this country and sold for home consumption; at that time cotton was in a more depressed condition in this country than it had been for years. I received last week the cotton circular from Liverpool, in which the writer says, that within the memory of man cotton had never been so low as it was that very week; and yet the merchants importing this cotton for the use of the Lancashire manufacturers were to have forced upon them a certain number of other cargoes upon which they could not by any possibility have calculated. And it was said that the not being able to do this was a grievance arising out of the operation of the Navigation Laws. The price of cotton has for years past averaged fourpence to fivepence per pound."

Being asked—

“Are you not aware that Prussia has given us notice that she means to put an end to the Reciprocity Treaties, and to pass restrictions against our commerce, in retaliation for those which we have passed against her?”—

He replied—

“We receive timber in a Prussian ship at the same rate of duty that we do in a British ship. Assuming that they should pass these retaliatory Acts against us, I think we are quite competent to fight our own battles. If we just maintain our own position and continue as we are, we are able to do it against all the world, so far as the Navigation Laws are concerned. Prussia insisted that her timber should come in her ships at the same rate of duty that it did in our own ships; we conceded that, and therefore why she is to complain of the Act establishing that perfect reciprocity I am not able to comprehend. There is no trade between England and Prussia in which the latter could retaliate to our injury that I am aware of. She is a great gainer by the trade with this country; and has no power to do anything against us.

“It has been stated that the freight of flour from Canada is much higher than the freight of that article from New York, which is owing, I think, to the circumstance that the New York packet-ships, whose main business is the conveyance of passengers, will bring goods to fill up at anything they can get, and if the Navigation Laws were repealed I do not apprehend it could affect that state of things, whereas a ship goes to Canada on purpose; they go in ballast, and must have a return cargo. It is a curious fact, we pay to bring coals from Newcastle to London 8s. a ton, and they can be sent to Petersburg for half the money. The reason is, that in going to Petersburg you go to a loading port; in coming to London you go back in ballast. The freight of goods from Rotterdam and other near ports to London would be 8s. to 10s. a ton; it is so small that it would not be worth while for our fine large ships to run over to bring it.”

“I have no doubt that British interests on the whole are more effectually promoted by the provisions of the existing law, than they would be by a general permission to import to Europe the produce of the distant parts of the world. I speak of the general mercantile interest of the country, which must necessarily include the interest of the consumer. I have no desire whatever for the repeal, or modification of the Navigation Laws, nor do I think it likely to conduce to the advancement of the commercial interests of the community. The prevailing opinion in the city of London is not in favour of a change.

Christian Allhusen, Esq., residing at Newcastle-upon-Tyne, a shipowner and merchant, stated :—

“ I am a native of Germany, but I have been residing in England since 1825. I was naturalized, I think, in 1828. I own five ships. I have been always strongly of opinion that the Navigation Laws have been most injurious to this country, to the shipowner as well as to the commercial interests generally. In the year 1837 or 1838, or about that period, the Americans wanted corn, their harvest having failed, and I received orders to ship corn, some of which I purchased at Dantzic, where I found I could not engage a Prussian vessel for North America unless I paid an enormous freight, because the trade between Prussia and North America not being of importance the ship would probably have to come back without getting a return freight. I was, therefore, obliged to import the corn in Prussian vessels into England, and then employ English vessels to convey this corn to America. Had I been able to send an English vessel to Prussia to load, it would probably have saved 5s. or 6s. a quarter, but in consequence of the Navigation Laws the Americans do not allow the importation of corn from Prussia into America in English ships. There is nothing in the English Navigation Laws which would have prevented my shipping a cargo of corn in Prussia, and taking it where I pleased; but because an American vessel is not allowed to load a cargo in Prussia for England, we are not allowed to load in Prussia for America. I have considered the subject of the Reciprocity Treaties, and I do not think it is likely they will long remain in force, because they are not based upon a principle of equality. Under the Reciprocity Treaties I think the English shipowner has been able to compete with the foreigner successfully. I am aware that it is the opinion of some persons that owing to the greater cost of ship-building and the higher rate of wages in England, the English shipowner will be incapable of competing with the foreigner in the event of the repeal of the Navigation Laws. I think, if the Navigation Laws are entirely repealed, the chance to the British shipowner will improve, and that he will be able to compete most successfully with all other nations. Before I came to England I was in a mercantile office at Rostock, in Mecklenburg, where I kept the accounts of a good many foreign vessels, and subsequently I have had an opportunity of comparing the cost of English with that of foreign vessels. I own five English vessels, and *have small shares in 18 or 20 foreign vessels*, and I have come to the conclusion that we have competed successfully with foreign ships, and that if the laws are repealed we shall compete with greater success. Three of my English ships were built at Sunderland and one at Newcastle. The fifth is of iron.

“ Prussian vessels are built entirely of Prussian timber,

which is not so durable as our own. The English shipowner has a great advantage in the construction of superior ships, as he can collect all the materials necessary at a lower cost than any other nation can do. Finland or Russian vessels are cheaper and inferior, but they do not last so long as our own ships, and they will not do for the India trade. With this exception of Prussian timber, which is inferior, I should say everything is cheaper in England; for instance, copper, iron, cordage, sailcloth*, and all sorts of ships' stores. Till lately I was of opinion that I could fit out and provision a vessel in Germany at a cheaper rate than here, but last year I had a ship loading in Hamburg, and I had another loading in the Thames, both for Calcutta, and the outfit for the London vessel cost me less than the outfit of the vessel despatched from Hamburg. I therefore came to the conclusion that I could fit out a ship cheaper in this country than elsewhere. The ship fitted out in Hamburg took partly American and partly Hamburg beef. I think the vessel which loaded in the Thames took Irish beef. In stating that my ship cost me more in Hamburg than here, I put every article together which the ship requires; for instance, fuel, cordage, and sails, &c., &c.† I am of opinion that if the Navigation Laws were repealed foreign ships would come to refit and repair in England in many cases, and also that we should build ships for many foreign nations, because we should build them cheaper and better. I think it is the fact that many foreign vessels now come to refit here. Danish ships are dearer than ours. I have not any positive proof in support of this statement, but as far as French ships are concerned I know that they are dearer than English vessels. The repairing of vessels is a profitable business; it is often more profitable than building them, because contracts cannot be easily made for repairs. The repeal of the Navigation Laws will enable the British shipowner to build ships cheaper than the foreigner; partly because, I think, he will build a greater

* See p. 98, *ante*.

† In the Appendix to the Evidence, p. 906, I find Mr. Allhusen's statement of the expenses of each ship, by which it appears that the outfit of the *Samarang*, Captain Pollock, 323 tons old measurement, 361 tons new measurement, carrying 17 men, cost in Hamburg, in September 1847, £.861 17s. 5d.; and that the *Emily*, 402 tons old measurement, 520 tons new measurement, carrying 20 men, cost for her outfit in London, in the month of May 1847, £.842 2s. 9d.; but as the quantities of each article supplied are not specified, I cannot understand that it proves anything beyond the fact that less money was expended for one ship than for the other. In the case of the ship fitted out at Hamburg, there was expended for riggers' account (exclusive of cordage, &c.) and shipwrights' and blacksmiths' account, a sum of not less than £.130, while for the ship fitted out in London there is only a sum of £.24 7s., block-makers' and smiths' account charged. It is clear that the two ships did not receive the like equivalent for the sums expended.

number than at present. If a shipbuilder can build a vessel in about a month he will be satisfied with a much smaller profit upon each vessel than a Prussian shipbuilder, who has always taken a much longer time; and also because the Prussian will be obliged to import during the summer season every article he may want from a distance. It is possible for the hull to be built in one country and the fittings to be put in in another; but I do not think we should be losers in that case, because it would follow that the fittings would be got from England for all their vessels. But if that were done in each case, I do not know how long the Prussian forests would last. A good deal of the wood comes down to the Prussian ports by the Vistula. The oak forests are a considerable distance from Dantzig, but the principal export of oak timber takes place at Stettin, where the forests are situated close to the water and more conveniently for exporting timber. Timber at Stettin has become considerably dearer. I think I paid 14*d.* per cubic foot, nearly equal to £.3 a load, including insurance, Sound dues, and other charges, but not duty, which at that time was 50*s.* on the average; that was about ten years ago. I have reason to believe it is more; I believe it is 15*d.* or 16*d.* per foot. Prussian timber will always be dearer in England than in Prussia; but the whole of the timber used in the construction of a superior vessel can be collected at a cheaper rate in England. I am not a practical shipbuilder, but I understand that a ship of the first character cannot be constructed of Prussian timber. I believe Prussian vessels are slightly cheaper than English ships, but the Dutch and French are dearer; and, looking at the whole bearings of the question, I conceive the British shipowner can compete with the Prussian. Foreign shipwrights take less wages, but I do not think they get through their work so well as the English; certainly not as quickly. Foreign ships, I think, have generally required eight or nine months, but in our ports ships are built in two or three. The whole cost approximates very closely between Prussia and England. I should say the Prussian has a slight advantage; but instead of Prussia increasing the number of her ships from about 740 to about 850, we have increased in Newcastle in a greater ratio; I believe from 1800 to about 1560. Our port alone, therefore, owns nearly double the number of vessels belonging to the whole kingdom of Prussia, which has always been considered as our greatest rival. That is since the introduction of the Reciprocity Treaties. The wages of seamen are higher in this country than in Prussia. I do not think Baltic seamen are likely to be employed on long voyages*; it would not suit their occupations; at present the Prussian sailor generally leaves his country in the month of March or April to return in the autumn, and in the autumn he is engaged

* See p. 112.

in other pursuits, sometimes on the ice, in fishing, or in the forests, which pay him sometimes better than going to sea. I am of opinion that if the Prussian sailor should be told that, after the repeal of the Navigation Laws, he is to go for two or three years, in fact, to be at sea altogether, he would not take much or anything less than English sailors receive. He is not a burden upon the shipowner during the winter; many of them live in very comfortable circumstances. I believe the Swedes and the Danes make long voyages. Foreign captains have generally a share in the vessel and a per-centage upon the profits, and are generally superior men by education, if compared to captains navigating vessels of a similar description in this country. Here the captain is engaged for the voyage*, and if the shipowner is not quite content with him, or desires to part with him from some cause or other, he sends him away and gets another. My London captains get £.12 per month, and two and a half per cent. upon the gross freight the ship earns. One, I think, earns about £.300 a year; he has his cabin found, and one-third of the passage-money, besides the two and a half per cent. on the freight.

" I believe almost all the ships that go from Calcutta to Hamburg are English ships, and my opinion is that Hamburg would never have acquired the important position that it occupies but for the absence of restrictions on trade, and particularly in permitting ships of all nations to enter that port without distinction. In the event of a repeal of the Navigation Laws, I do not think it would make any difference to the Indian trade. It would bring American ships into competition with ours; but when America wanted the produce of India our ships would not be precluded from carrying it, as I have no doubt that, upon the repeal of our Navigation Laws, the repeal of the American Navigation Laws would also take place. In that case the trade would be opened with America, and Continental goods and Indian goods would be carried by English ships to America, and it would end in our getting some articles cheaper than they are now. I am also of opinion that, as England has more trade than any other country, that every trading operation can be carried on cheaper here than elsewhere. Hamburg does not produce any of those articles which England produces. The boundaries of the town are very limited; I think they do not extend beyond the walls of the city; it cannot therefore grow corn, or timber, or anything else. All the raw produce of the world is wanted in Hamburg. The corn required for the consumption of the place, I believe, is mainly supplied by Prussians and Hanoverians. It not only wants all the raw materials, but all the manufactured materials of the world. Almost everything has to be imported. England produces

* This statement is incorrect, and is controverted by several witnesses.

some articles of consumption and imports others, but the amount of her sales, I believe, surpass the amount of her purchases."

Being asked—

"Can you compare a single town with an island like England?"

He said—

"Inasmuch as a town is a town and a country is a country, you cannot make a precise comparison between the two, but looking at the whole question, there can be no doubt that leaving industry unfettered will benefit England more than any other country. No party in Hamburg has asked for protection, and if protection were offered I think it would be declined. I travelled for six or seven years on the Continent, and the argument of foreigners was, that if they wished to be prosperous their Governments must impose the same restrictions upon English imports which England had for years levied upon all they are able to supply; or, in other words, that their ports ought to be shut against England. Those have been the arguments of Prussians and Germans generally; and as soon as they feel more independent, I should infer they would in all matters look for equality. I do not consider the imposition of duties for the purpose of revenue inconsistent with the principles of free trade. I would have no protective duties; and I believe direct taxation the most beneficial. I would have no protective duties at all. As a merchant it never struck me that I had any reason to complain of the rate of freight; at times it has been high. As a shipowner I should give the same answer, because every shipowner has a right to make the best bargain he can. I have sometimes had very high freights, and I have at other times had very low freights. I rather think the repeal of the Navigation Laws would lessen freights without lessening the profit of the shipowner. He would have more employment for his ship than he now has; and instead of confining his observations to his own ports, I think competition would increase his endeavours to find out in which respect vessels of foreign countries surpass his own, and that he would imitate those which he finds are likely to obtain a preference. I have not the slightest doubt that, with the great capital and enterprise of this country, the English shipowner will compete successfully with the shipowners of foreign countries.

"I think the knowledge that English masters must be employed now in merchant-ships tends to keep the standard of qualification low. Perhaps the most expeditious way of raising it would be to bring English captains in competition with foreign captains. I think that any law which would compel captains of merchant-ships to undergo an examination would tend to improve their capabilities to command ships. The

repeal of the Navigation Laws would probably lead to the captains being chosen from a superior class of people. Some captains are very deficient in ordinary acquirements. I have had some in my office who have not been able to sign their name, but who have put a cross under the bill of lading. I should generally find a difficulty, in the ports in the north of England, in getting captains competent to navigate to India. I am the owner of foreign ships as well as English; but my interest in British is much larger than in foreign shipping. I have found it more profitable to own English than foreign ships. My French vessel sails from Rouen, and goes occasionally to England; she has also been at Odessa and Algiers. She is obliged to return to France, but not to Rouen. The captain must by law be a Frenchman. My course has been to increase my interest in British, and lessen it in foreign ships. When it was thought likely last year that the Navigation Laws might be repealed I took that opportunity of selling some of the shares I had in foreign vessels, because I thought I should not meet with so good an opportunity again. I will not say that the English shipowners could, under the repeal, build and sail a British vessel cheaper than the foreign shipowner; but, taking all things together, I think the British ship would be more profitable than the foreign ship. If the Navigation Laws were repealed, it would depend upon circumstances whether I would employ foreign seamen instead of English. At times it might answer to employ foreign seamen; it might do so on distant voyages; but if a shipowner in the coasting trade were to get foreign seamen I do not believe it would answer. I do not think many foreigners would like to go in the coasting trade, though they would be willing to engage for long voyages*; on the other hand, many English seamen are employed in foreign ships. I do not, therefore, see that the removal of restrictions in this respect would make any difference in the end. I should have no particular inducement to take foreign sailors instead of English; but if I wanted ten men for any ship about to sail, and I fell in with foreigners, I would consider it an advantage to be at liberty to choose between taking them or not. I would take the best men I could get without reference to their nationality. I believe there are now a good many foreign sailors employed in English ships, notwithstanding the Navigation Laws. There is no doubt that English seamen do more work than any others.

* See p. 109, in which the witness contradicts his own statement.

William Rushton Coulborn, Esq., a partner in the house of Lodge, Pritchard, and Coulborn, the oldest house in Liverpool in the American trade, stated :—

“ My firm is very largely engaged in the management of ships. We are also shipowners. I have thought much and deeply upon the proposed repeal of the Navigation Laws, and I consider that the effect would be most disastrous. My house is more particularly engaged in the American trade, and I will show why such a total repeal would act more particularly against this country. We have not for many years had any chance in competing with the Americans until latterly our steamers have taken a portion of the goods. The whole of the export trade from this country to the United States has been in the hands of the Americans. It is an exception if a single package has been shipped in a British ship. American ships are constantly consigned to our house. We built two ships expressly for the American trade some years ago ; they were the finest ships that could be built in England ; one was built on the east coast and the other in Liverpool ; but we found, after trying for some time, that we were always opposed when we put on for an American port, and the far greater proportion of all the fine freights went by American vessels ; consequently we had to ship very rough freight in our own vessels and take iron or salt, and any bulky articles we could get. When we got to America we found we had an even chance of freight to this country, but we could not successfully compete, having no outward freight to America. A friend of mine in Liverpool built himself a ship called the *Diana*, expressly for the Indian trade, the finest that could be built in Liverpool. I had in Liverpool, recently arrived from Calcutta, one of the ships I was alluding to as having been originally built for the American trade ; there sprang up a great demand for ships to convey passengers to New York, and my friend and myself were induced, instead of sending our ships to India, as we intended, to send them to New York. We tried what we could get in goods. There were at the time four American ships on the berth. The *Diana*, of about 600 tons, being, as I before said, the finest ship that could be built in England, *made 140L freight out!* The cargo was composed of bar iron, soda, ash, twelve bales of blankets, ten trusses, four or five cases, and other rough goods. The orders for goods come from America ; it is very rare that any manufacturer in England ships goods to America on his own account ; and when orders for goods come the invariable rule is to order the goods to be shipped by an American vessel. If an English ship were to carry a cargo of manufactured goods from this country to America she would have very little chance of obtaining a sale in America ; it

would depend upon the market, but I never heard of the thing being done. The system originated in patriotism, but latterly I conceive that American ships sail faster and make their passages better than English ships; but it is because the superior class of English ships are not able to compete with the American ships. There are very few 12 A 1 British ships in the trade; they cannot live in it. During the summer months British North American ships bring timber from Canada, which is the only advantage we have, and that helps them to continue in the trade. Steamers get good freights on American account. The quickness and regularity with which they take goods is the cause. English ships labour under a disadvantage compared with American as regards the export trade of this country; but I do not think the amount of assorted cargoes shipped from England interferes with us to a great extent. American vessels take out assorted cargoes. English colonial produce is imported into America in British ships, in the direct trade. American ships are handsomer and sail better than those we employ in that trade. I do not consider they are better manned, nor that there is any sailor in the world superior to the English sailor; but it is a notorious fact that American ships, instead of being manned by three-fourths of American seamen, are manned by three-fourths English. The captains of American ships are very smart men, but they are not, as a body, men of education. My opinion is that the Americans pay higher wages than we do, but carry fewer men. I do not think the sailors better lodged on board American ships. If I were to buy the finest American ship that they have, and, according to the liberty which Mr. Labouchere very kindly proposes to give us, register her as a British ship, she would instantly lose caste; and if I were to lay her on as a British ship I should not get one package of goods in Liverpool. No alteration in the Navigation Laws would enable British ships to compete in that trade while the Reciprocity Treaties exist. From Mr. Porter's statement it appears that between 700,000 and 800,000 British tons enter the American ports in the course of a year, but I think I can convince your Lordships that that is a fallacy; I do not believe that 766,000 tons of British ships do really trade to the United States sailing on the high seas. The principal part of that so stated 766,000 tons of shipping is composed of steamers and other craft sailing on the lakes between Canada and the United States, which is proved by the following statement, showing the national flags of the foreign shipping entering into and clearing from the United States ports in the year ending 30th June 1846:—

FLAGS.	Vessels entered.		Vessels cleared.	
	No.	Tons.	No.	Tons.
British *	5,209	808,797	5,194	813,287
French	51	14,761	46	13,066
Spanish	37	7,062	37	7,504
Portuguese	12	1,914	14	2,192
Russian	4	1,571	6	2,243
Prussian	21	5,439	20	5,409
Swedish	84	24,057	77	22,407
Danish	19	4,910	20	5,265
Hanseatic	194	71,787	173	63,069
Hanoverian	2	580	4	712
Dutch	13	3,435	14	4,299
Belgian	8	3,190	8	3,306
Austrian	7	2,355	6	1,844
Sardinian	18	3,603	13	2,315
Sicilian	18	4,318	12	2,861
Tuscan	..	..	1	386
Mexican	36	3,448	35	3,204
Guatimalian	2	214	1	107
Venezuelan	5	763	5	763
Brazilian	4	631	3	452
New Granadian	2	293	1	180
Chilian	..	..	3	1,083
Sundries	4	1,013	..	..
Total	5,750	965,111	5,693	957,154

“Total Amount of American and foreign Tonnage employed in the Commerce of the United States for one Year, ending 30th June 1846:—

	Inwards.	Outwards.	
		Tons.	Tons.
American (U. S.)	2,120,594	2,192,807	
Foreign	965,111	957,154	
Total	3,094,705	3,149,961	

“THO⁸ COURT,

“Secretary, Liverpool Underwriters' Association.

“Liverpool, 20th March 1848.

* The British flags entered inwards comprise the following and other shipping:—*England, Ireland, and Scotland* 403 ships, 255,546 tons; *British colonies in North America*, 4477 ships, 515,879 tons; *West Indies*, 267 ships, 38,724 tons, &c., and the outward clearances are similarly composed. So that the actual trade between Great Britain and the United States does not actually amount outwards to America to more than about 250,000 tons and 200,000 inwards, instead of the larger quantity to be inferred from Mr. Porter's statement. The tonnage between our North American colonies and the United States is accounted for in the numerous steamers and other craft constantly running to and fro on the lakes between Canada and the States.

" By analysing the foregoing it appears that of these 965,111 tons entering inwards there are of British, namely, of England, Scotland, and Ireland, about 250,000 tons, and outwards 200,000 tons. The American tonnage consists wholly of registered sea-going ships. The American tonnage connected with the lake trade is not registered at all; and the great producing States of America are on the banks of the lakes. I have a statement for the years 1844, 1845, and 1846 of the outward clearances from Liverpool to the United States, distinguishing the British from the foreign tonnage, compiled from the books in the underwriters' rooms. In 1844 there were 236 British vessels of 136,038 tons, and 444 foreign of 279,226 tons, the latter almost entirely American. It is very rare for any but an English or American vessel to clear out for any port of the United States. In 1845 there were 195 British ships of 127,613 tons, and of foreign 534 ships of 341,696 tons. In 1846, 238 British ships of 154,336 tons, and of foreign 508 ships of 335,846 tons. Out of those 966,000 tons, which Mr. Porter in his tables has put as the tonnage of foreign vessels, there are from the British colonies in North America 515,875 tons. Now, we have no particular trade with our British American colonies to account for more than about 22,171 tons, say about 20,000, consequently it must include repeated voyages made on the lakes, and to places that they are trading between. We know that there is actually little trade between British America and the United States on the high seas. The produce of the principal corn-growing countries of America is carried on the lakes, and we compete successfully with the Americans on the lakes, having canal communication down to the St. Lawrence, solely English. We have no trade between Quebec and New Orleans and New York; between Halifax and New York there is a trade, and with St. John's and other lower ports. There is also a trade between our North American colonies and America, but nothing like 766,000 tons; and we have very little trade between those countries in sea-going ships.

" American ships have a very great advantage over British ships in provisions. Before 1842 we supplied our own ships entirely with Irish beef and pork; but in that year Sir Robert Peel reduced the duty, if I remember rightly, from 12s. to 8s. a cwt., and in 1845 removed the duty wholly, and since that time I have not seen a tierce of Irish beef in the market. We are entirely supplied with American. The freight and charges make it 15 per cent. dearer to us than to the Americans. An English ship must pay that 15 per cent. more for the provisions necessary for the outward voyage, but when she arrives in America she stands the same chance as an American ship of getting provisions for the homeward passage. We have no ships that trade entirely to the United States. I am not aware

of a single English ship that could live in that trade only. They go to the north of Europe; to St. Petersburgh, or to the White Sea. I have ships going every year to Archangel, and I have ships going every year to Canada. Before the duty was taken off I used to pay about five guineas a tierce for Irish beef, but when the Americans were allowed to import it duty free they ran down the price to 49s. 6d., till the Irish dealers could not live in the market, and they were driven out altogether, and we now pay from 94s. to 95s. a tierce. The difference between the price in New York and Liverpool ranged in 1847 between 39s. and 16s., being that much higher at the latter place.

" As a general rule I should say, in the American trade, that on an average three-fourths of all the earnings of the ships go out to America. The money is not spent in this country, as it would be if it were earned by British ships; neither is payment made by remittances of goods. All, except ordinary disbursements, dock and light dues, pilotage, &c., &c., goes out as money to America. You may trace in the balance of trade that this money goes to pay for goods; but if it were not for these freights which have to be remitted in this way to America, we should have a higher exchange, I conceive, inasmuch as there is a certain amount of money earned every year in freight by those American ships, and that has to go back again to America; it is here in England to be drawn against. The inference I draw is, that it is a great disadvantage to this country, when so much is earned in freight, that it should go out to be spent in America instead of being spent in this country, and which, if earned by British ships, would tend to the employment of the labourers of this country. I should say that the amount of freight earned by British ships is between £25,000,000 and £30,000,000 annually. My statement is founded upon the registered tonnage of England engaged in the various trades, and upon the average earnings of my ships during three or four years."

In reply to the question—

" Does the consumer of this country benefit by low freights?"

Mr. Coulborn stated—

" My experience is that the producer, as the rule, pays the freight, if in moderation, and not the consumer. Manufacturers and merchants, in ordering cotton, being aware of the probable consumption of this country, take into account the stock we have and the probable crop, and order cotton on a certain basis; we do not enter into any calculation at all of freight or rate of exchange; but our correspondents in America make those calculations, and if the quantity of cotton to be shipped be very large, the freight will rule high, and the price comparatively low. If, on the contrary, the quantity of cotton to be shipped be very small the freight will be low, and the price of

the article high. When fears arose here of a famine, the price of rice in the Liverpool market was about 12s. 6d. per cwt., and the freight ranged from £5 to £5 10s. a ton. The Calcutta merchants having an impression that we should have a famine shipped rice in immense quantities. The price was going up here, and it gradually rose from 12s. 6d. to 25s. per cwt.; *the price in India never rose at all, but the freight rose to £10 a ton.* That rice is now in any quantity to be procured at 9s. 6d. per cwt., so that *the consumer has not paid that high freight.* The same has occurred in the article of tea in my own knowledge. Tea has been shipped at a high rate of freight, but it has not been sold within 25 per cent. of the original cost, to say nothing of the freight and charges. I consider that in moderation even the duty is paid by the producer, not by the consumer. When the duty of $\frac{1}{6}$ of a penny was taken off cotton, without any alteration of the probable supply, or in the quantity, the price immediately rose in Liverpool to nearly the same amount as it was when the duty existed; and so it was in America when the news of the duty having been taken off got out.

" The immediate effect, in my judgment, of the repeal of the Navigation Laws would be to depress freights even below the present low rates, which are not remunerative; but the ultimate effect would be not to lower freights, because shipping, like other things, is a question of supply and demand. If the St. Lawrence were opened to the Americans, they would gradually but surely work the British shipowner out of the trade, and then as British shipping decreased so would American shipping increase; and I do not believe, myself, that eventually freights would be any lower. Should that event take place I do not know how far I should build ships or buy ships abroad, but if I did buy them I should never attempt to sail them under the British flag. I would appoint some one as agent or captain in whom I had confidence, and I should sail under a foreign flag; for I know that I could not compete under the English flag. I could have a foreign master and a foreign crew, and be released the disadvantages to which I am subject as a British shipowner.

" I have been concerned in the building of some ships for the American trade; and I also have owned several British North American vessels, of which I know the first cost. We built a ship called the *Lady Rowena*; she is a vessel of about 400 tons, and would cost £23 a ton to sea, fitted out and coppered. The first cost of a colonial ship is hardly any criterion of her price. You may build a colonial Quebec ship which would class seven years at £7 a ton, but when she came here to be classed for seven years at Lloyd's she would cost an additional £5 10s. a ton, for fastenings, iron knees, coppering, and different things connected with her being fitted out; also for proper anchors

and chains. American ships are coppered in Liverpool. The *United States* steamer came to Liverpool to be coppered. Copper is also shipped from Liverpool to the United States, but not iron, except in its raw state, which is sent frequently, also iron for railroads and other purposes ; but iron, as it is used in ships, is manufactured there. I never heard of chains, anchors, rivets, and things of that kind going in that state to New York for the purposes of shipbuilding. I do not think there is much difference between New Brunswick ships and Canadian ships. Quebec ships are built of oak, and at several of the lower ports they are built partly of soft wood—pine—and do not stand so many years at *Lloyd's*, though with care I believe they will last longer than Canada ships. There has been a great increase of colonial shipbuilding of late. The demand has been in the American trade. They are very well calculated for bar harbours, being of a light draught. The cotton ports of the United States are all bar harbours.

" The 12 A 1 British-built ships from 300 to 800 tons are employed in the Brazil and South American trade, on both the east and west coast of South America ; but the larger ships in the East India and China trades exclusively. Such ships would be materially interfered with by the repeal of the Navigation Law. I have known an American ship occasionally come to Liverpool to load for China ; and within my knowledge the rate of freight, which is usually 50s., was reduced to 25s. during the time the American ship was on the berth. American ships take British manufactures, or anything that can be had. The American ship was induced to come to Liverpool by the high rate of freight, and having realized that freight, was able to run away from Liverpool with whatever she could get for China, having a crew on board, which the English ship would not have till she sailed ; and the English ship could not afford to lay on and receive only 25s. This course has been only occasionally pursued. In the American trade we take as few apprentices as we can, which is, I believe, the case in all short voyages. It is not the practice of Liverpool shipowners to have more apprentices than they are compelled to take by law. I consider it in the American trade a very great disadvantage to have boys. In one or two ships going to India, I have taken a boy more than was necessary, because in long voyages it is no disadvantage. As a shipowner, I would rather be without the obligation of taking boys. Not more than one apprentice out of ten serves his time out, so that we are at the expense of maintaining them for a year or two, and then, when they become sailors, they run away and go into the American service. I consider all expenses for that period as so much lost to us. Unless it is for the good of the nation I would do without apprentices. In the East India trade I would continue to take boys ; they go home after a long voyage, and when the ship is

again ready for sea, we send for them. I have now one or two captains who have been brought up as apprentices by me in the East India trade. I consider that the merchant and shipowner labour under much disadvantage from the manner in which magistrates deal with the complaints of sailors. The sailors always cling together. If a sailor says one thing, I have known instances in which all the others have clung to it. If they wish to desert for the purpose of obtaining higher wages, and they have no real grievance, they make one, and go before a magistrate. I have known magistrates in Australia, Calcutta, and Bombay say, ' You had better pay these men off,' which is the very thing the men want; and I have thereby lost nearly a whole ship's crew.

" I have heard of there being produce to be shipped in Australia, and no ships to bring it, which may occasionally occur, but the vessels must be very small vessels that cannot bring the freight they usually have to send. I have never been able to fill a ship at any port, except by going to India.

" The feeling of British shipowners and British merchants with respect to the repeal of the Navigation Laws is, that if they are repealed the English shipowner will be ruined. In all cases where there has been a Reciprocity Treaty there has been a diminution of British shipping, except with reference to America. There has been an increase of British shipping to America, because of the increased growth of cotton and other produce, that has taken a much larger amount of tonnage; but in all other cases the British shipping has decreased; and in America it has not increased in the same proportion as the tonnage of American ships. We have a Reciprocity Treaty with France; but France has not a sufficient mercantile navy of her own. British tonnage has, no doubt, increased. New resources have been opened up to the British shipowner, and we have an advantage which America has not; for the United States have no colonies. Generally speaking, the increase of British tonnage since the Reciprocity Treaties has been in the long voyages, and the falling off with respect to short voyages. The longest voyage that I am aware of with which we have a direct Reciprocity Treaty is the United States. It takes longer to go to some ports of the United States than to the northern ports of Europe.

Thomas Alexander Mitchell, Esq., M.P., stated:—

" I have been engaged in trade for the last nineteen years. I own the greater part of one ship. I had a strong feeling upon the subject of the Navigation Laws prior to the appointment of the Committee of the House of Commons last year, and upon that Committee I was obliged to collect a good deal of inform-

ation. As far as the injury to the mercantile interest is concerned, I think that the worst part is the injury inflicted by the delay caused in shipments, and which would be reduced by their repeal. Mine is the Russia trade, and undoubtedly I have been often, for a month or two at a time, without British ships in the ports of Russia, while a Continental ship was always to be had ; and the articles that we ship from Russia go just as much to France and Germany, and Belgium and Holland, as they do to this country. I am a large exporter of flax. The manufacturers of flax in France and Belgium have recently largely increased their supplies from Russia ; a few years ago they imported from this country between one and two millions of flax yarns*, but that trade has now nearly ceased. The French and Belgians have the opportunity of getting their flax by means of foreign ships, whilst we are confined to English ships ; and consequently the manufacturer in this country is placed at a disadvantage, as compared with his foreign competitor. My firm is in London. I have a firm in Russia, and I have also a firm in London. I am speaking of the injury done to the manufacturers in England by the restrictions upon shipping. The delay takes place in Russia. I cannot find English ships to take cargoes lying in Russia ready to be shipped, and there are hardly any Russian ships. I do not export from England. I am both an English and a Russian merchant. My complaint against the Navigation Law is as an English merchant. I import goods from Russia, and I complain that I am subjected to delay in importing those goods, and also to a loss of market ; and I state that that loss must fall upon the manufacturer. I have it in my power to charter ships to bring home the goods. I very often do so, but it is constantly the case that we are without any British ships disengaged in Russia, from the prevalence of contrary winds. My opinion is, that upon a repeal of the Navigation Laws freights would not, in the first instance, decline. The removal of all restrictions would increase the carrying trade, and if the ships were not simultaneously increased, it follows that on the whole freights would rather advance than decline. Subsequently, if that advance caused ships to be profitably employed, there would be no doubt an increase in shipping and a reduction of freights ; but that reduction might be effected without any loss to the shipowner, because the shipowner would profit by avoiding the delay which now constantly occurs, and also by avoiding having, as he frequently has now, to go with a cargo to a port, and to leave that port in ballast. The most absurd restriction is that of prohibiting the bringing the produce of Asia, Africa, and America from ports in Europe ; because, as you are compelled by Reciprocity Treaties with foreign powers

to admit those goods when slightly manufactured as the produce of the country in which they are manufactured, it gives a direct bonus to the foreign manufacturer. But I think the colonists have the most right to complain, more especially those in North America. As regards the whole foreign trade you have a monopoly of the closest description, because under the most restricted system of the Corn Laws you could always, of late years, import foreign corn at a certain duty, whereas the Navigation Law tells you that you are not to employ any ships except your own, or the ships of the particular country that supplies the produce*.

" Assuming that the countries of the north of Europe were to institute a system of retaliation, the trade between Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Prussia, and Russia, and this country, consisting chiefly of raw materials, some of which cannot be got elsewhere, would be stopped; therefore any such step would be most serious to this country. Hemp, flax, and wood are three of the main articles; the others are tallow, seeds, and corn. Nearly all the flax and hemp consumed in this country comes from this quarter of the world. Sweden, Norway, Denmark, and Prussia allow English vessels to import goods from any part of the world, paying the same duties in those countries that the vessels of their own country pay; therefore they have a right to complain that we do not put them on the same footing. As regards the Reciprocity Treaties as now established, I cannot conceive any system that can work more disadvantageously for the British shipowner than the one hitherto maintained. The Navigation Laws, on the ground of the merchant service being a nursery for seamen, have burdened ships with a variety of duties; it has compelled them to take apprentices, and subjected them to having their seamen taken from them and put on board Her Majesty's vessels; it has subjected them to all those burdens, and then places them, by the Reciprocity Treaties, in direct competition with those countries in that very branch of the trade in which those countries have the greatest advantages of all. Great reliance has been placed upon the fact of nearly all the goods from Norway and Sweden coming over in Swedish and Norwegian bottoms. It is the same with the coasting trade of this country; there is hardly any port between which and London there is not a regular line of ships running, owned chiefly by the traders at each particular port, all of whom have an interest in them; and supposing foreign ships to offer to take the goods at 20 per cent. less, they would not employ her. Perhaps not to the same extent, but to some extent. British ships have the privilege of carrying the produce of any quarter of the world to

* Mr. Mitchell was reminded by the Committee that this was not a recent, but an original provision of the Navigation Laws.

the ports of the Baltic. A great many English ships avail themselves of it by taking sugar from Cuba to Russia. I am not aware how many English ships have engaged in the direct import trade into Prussia, but the whole trade is of a most limited nature. I am not aware that ships of any burden cannot enter the Prussian ports. I apprehend a ship drawing 15 feet water occasionally loads cargoes of wood at some of those Prussian ports. I think if Prussia were to retaliate she would probably be followed by Hamburg, and by increasing the duties on our export of manufactures to those countries. The Zollverein could almost compel Hamburg to do so. I believe the returns will show that the export of our manufactures to Germany is greater than to any other Continental power. My own opinion is, that as this country is the greatest consuming market, and the country possessing the greatest capital, the natural tendency of things is for it to become the great dépôt of produce for the world. Supposing that to be so, whenever anything occurred to change the course of an article in a country they would apply to this country for it, and that would give increased employment to British ships; because, whatever employment they got in that way would be so much more than they would have got had not the goods come here: my opinion is, that trade would be increased, and an increase of shipping be required. It is quite impossible to set any limit to the increase of trade. Importations have increased so much within the last 20 years that it is impossible to say to what extent they will not further increase; and if they do not the prospects of this country, with a rapidly increasing population, are very bad indeed. A removal of restrictions and giving facilities to intercourse among nations would no doubt lead to its rapid extension.

"As regards ships classed from 12 to 14 years A 1 at Lloyd's, according to the rule laid down by Lloyd's committee, no ship of any other country in the world can be made to equal ours. The finest English ship would stand 12 years in the first instance on the first letter, which has been recently extended to 14, and would then obtain a renewal for 4 years, making it from 16 to 18, and then by undergoing some slight repairs, the time would be increased to from 27 to 29 years. Many of those ships cost £25 per ton. The ships that would come nearest would be American, which are built of live oak, and those built of French and Adriatic oak. I believe those would stand 9 years as against 12 years. A vessel built of Prussian oak would stand 7 years. Our North American colonies can produce fir ships as cheaply as any country in the world. Russia can produce them cheapest; but a Russian ship, as far as the wood is concerned, cannot be built cheaper than a British colonial ship. As regards every expense of outfit, the sail-cloth, cordage, iron and copper work, there is no country that

can at all approach England either in quality or cheapness ; and the best proof of that is, that we export all those articles, and also yarn, used for canvas, very largely to Germany*. If builders in Sweden and Denmark wanted to build any better than pine ships, they must come to this country for better materials, for they have hardly any at home. I understand that live oak is very nearly as dear as English oak, and very scarce. I have taken the cost of the different materials of which the ships are composed, and I infer from that that a ship can be built at Sunderland cheaper than abroad. I have not taken wages into account. My ship was a 12 A ship ; she was built at Bridport, the town I represent ; I do not know that I looked so closely after it as I ought to have done, but I think it cost £.17 10s. a ton, built entirely of British oak. I could not build such a ship in London at that price ; but the shipwrights in the river have driven the building trade entirely away. The only ships that are built in London are first-class, built by Green and Wigram. By the shipwrights in London standing out for 6s. a day, and by combining to prevent others from working at lower wages, they have driven the trade from the river, especially to Sunderland. The wages of shipwrights in this country are nominally higher than the wages in the Baltic, but considerably lower than the wages in the United States. I have seen 12 men in Russia doing the work which two men would do here.

“ As regards the shipping employed in the branches of trade with which I am most concerned, I have no hesitation in saying that I should give a decided preference to foreign ships. Greater care is taken of the cargo by foreign captains than by Englishmen ; it has become so notorious that four or five years ago we got annual orders from a Continental admiralty, and the instructions were, ‘ Employ any ship but an English ship to bring the cargo, because we always find that the English captains take no care in stowing their cargo, and they are far more reckless ; ’ and the proof of that is that at this moment goods by foreign ships can be insured as a whole at a lower premium than by English ships. I except the fine English ships that are engaged in the China and East India trade. The Baltic captains are compelled to undergo an examination in mathematics, astronomy, foreign languages, and a little of the exchanges—all that presupposes a man of general education. This man when he arrives at a foreign port is sure to meet with the best freight he can get for the owner ; but with regard to the English captain, the first broker that seizes him lugs him into a public house, gets him drunk, and then sells him, and when his ship is chartered with a cargo he is not on board to take care of the stowing of the cargo

* See p. 121, *ante*.

properly. As regards the damage done to the cargo, the owner is a gainer, because the cargo arrives with its weight increased, and he consequently gets a higher freight. My opinion is that the class which will be most benefited by the repeal of the Navigation Laws will be the shipping interest of this country by obtaining better captains. I get a couple of hundreds of those ships that I charter every year, and I have an opportunity of seeing the captains, and, as a sample, I may state that of 100 out of those 200 ships the captains can hardly sign their names to the charter party. I ascribe the inferiority of the captains chiefly to the poverty of the shipowners. You must pass an Act of Parliament compelling the shipowner to pay double the rate to the captain that he pays now, because you will not get an educated man to serve at a low rate: and that operates downwards; because, if you have an uneducated and brutal captain, he makes his ship a hell upon earth to his crew, and you will not get a superior class of seamen to serve on board, and your best seamen will do what they are now doing—go in shoals to the United States. My opinion is, that the best plan will be to subject those ships to competition with foreign ships, and when the owners of those ships find that foreign ships come and take away their freight, they will inquire how it is that they do so, and will find that the main reason is the incompetency of their captains."

George Frederick Young, Esq., shipowner and ship-builder, of London, stated:—

"I was examined before the Committee of the House of Commons in 1847. In the course of an examination extending over five days it is probable that there may be many inaccuracies of expression in my replies; but I wish to make no particular observations respecting them. There are, however, some points on which I desire to correct the evidence I then gave; and the first is, with respect to the Return of Mr. Porter, which has been so much dwelt upon, purporting to relate to 'protected' and 'unprotected' trades. I was utterly ignorant until I saw the first Report of your Lordships' Committee, of the use which had been made of my name and my evidence in regard to the preparation of that Return, referring to me as the cause of its preparation, and to my opinion as the foundation on which it rests; but I complain a great deal more with reference to the effect of that Return upon the mind of the public on the great question with which it is connected. I believe it is now admitted by Mr. Porter that he was wrong, that the heading of the Return incorrectly described the two classes of tonnage into which the trades of the country are divided as 'protected'

and 'unprotected;' and for my part I certainly withdraw the assertion that we have no protection in our trade with some of the countries enumerated, because I am aware that very considerable protection to British shipping still remains. It was a very inadvertent expression. In 1816, the first year in which the Reciprocity Treaty with the United States came into operation, the British tonnage entering inwards was 45,140 tons, and that clearing outwards 71,897 tons. Between 1815 and 1824 this country was in the same position of reciprocity with the United States in which it has been placed with reference to all the other countries cited by the formation of reciprocity treaties. And when we find that the British tonnage (which at the commencement of the period in 1816 was, according to the account I have quoted, 45,000 or 71,000, or, according to the figures cited by one of your Lordships, more than that), amounted in 1824, according to Mr. Porter's Tables, to only 44,994, it will be seen that, under the Reciprocity Treaty with the United States during the first eight years of its operation, the British tonnage had absolutely declined. I have not the slightest doubt that 1824 was selected as being the year in which the reciprocity system with other countries commenced. I have admitted its fairness; but I next complain of the omission of all explanation in the Return respecting steam vessels, which very largely consist of passenger vessels, and which make such frequently repeated voyages as to swell the aggregate amount of British tonnage at the latter period in a manner which could only lead to the most false conclusions. I never happened in the course of my reading to meet with one single instance in which those who have commented upon this particular Return, as proving a case against the Navigation Laws, have given the slightest weight to the exaggeration of repeated voyages. It was not so treated in the October number of the 'Edinburgh Review,' nor in Mr. Ricardo's book, in which the return is given twice over *verbatim*; neither was it adverted to in any of the reasonings of any public journal on that side with which I am acquainted. But I really consider the whole of this and of all similar returns as fundamentally fallacious for the purpose for which they appear to be prepared. It is only by an analysis of the circumstances connected with the trade of each particular country that we can justly determine whether any increase or decrease is the result of legal protection to navigation or of its withdrawal. Taking Russia as an instance, it will be apparent that the trade with that country has enormously increased, and that a very large proportion of that increase has fallen to British shipping. I have cause to believe that the principal reason of this is the impossibility of the Russians pursuing maritime commerce, owing to their political and social regulations, one being that, as the system of serfdom almost universally prevails there, no Russian subject can go to

sea in the foreign trade without bond being given to his feudal lord for his return to the place from whence he is taken. I pass by the effect of the inclusion of the repeated voyages of steamers in the trades with Germany, the Netherlands, and France, to which I before adverted, because I am aware that your Lordships have had your attention sufficiently directed to that point. If reference be made to the increase of American tonnage as well as to that of British tonnage, it will be seen that the advance in American has considerably exceeded that in British tonnage, and that in 1846, when we had been 30 years in reciprocity with America, the United States possessed considerably more than two-thirds of their whole trade with Great Britain. America, in 1846, possessed 435,399 tons, the British being 205,123. The peculiarity which secured to Great Britain the bulk of that portion still retained in the American trade is that the cheaply-built North American colonial ships are found to be especially adapted for the cotton trade with that country*, although unsuited to the general purposes of tropical commerce. I would also earnestly invite attention to the effect of the omission of foreign tonnage from this Return, for if the amount of foreign shipping in those trades which are enumerated by Mr. Porter had been inserted, it would have been perceived that it had increased from 758,599 tons in 1824 to 1,764,784 tons in 1846.

" In my judgment the effect of passing the measure before Parliament for the alteration of the Navigation Laws or for their entire repeal would be to cause a progressive decline in British Navigation, and a rapid increase in that of foreign nations. I should think it an act of folly if the Navigation Laws were repealed for a British shipowner to register his ship as British if he could possibly avoid it. It would be to him only a badge which would subject him to restrictions and disabilities, while, so far as I can perceive, it would confer upon him no benefit whatever. At p. 32 of the Papers relating to the commercial marine of Great Britain, you will find that Vice-Consul Hertzlet, at the port of Memel, makes this statement:—' There is another reason why British vessels are cried down by British merchants and others, and whereby not only British owners are injured, and every species of mechanics who gain their livelihood by shipwork are losers, and foreign sailors taught to compete with British—I allude to the great and increasing investment of British capital in foreign vessels in countries where Reciprocity Treaties exist. It is impossible to state the exact amount, but most of the foreign vessels which trade to America—Austrian, Prussian, Argentine, &c.—are more or less in fact sailing for account and risk of British owners, who have, under the pretext of mortgage or

* See p. 119, *ante*.

otherwise, invested their property in ships under these flags, because they enjoy the same privileges as British vessels, whilst the original cost is much less, and the wages of the men and price of provisions considerably lower. These facts are naturally difficult to prove, but there is no doubt of their truth*. I myself know one instance in which an English capitalist engaged to a considerable extent in French navigation, and with some success. I am cognizant also of an offer from Sweden which was made to friends of my own, and in which I was invited to participate, for fitting out ships from Sweden to enter into the Australian trade, which I was induced to decline, although it was made apparent to me that very great advantage would be derived from prosecuting that trade in Swedish ships, even as the law at present stands; and if that law were repealed I should say, as a British shipowner, that I should not think of sailing my ships under the British flag. I consider that the present Bill † would have the same effect, and I am doubtful whether not to the same extent. I have great doubts whether a total repeal of the Navigation Laws would not be preferable to the passing of the measure such as it has been described to be by the minister who introduced it. By sailing ships under a foreign flag I should be exempted from those restrictions from which I cannot escape while I navigate under the British flag. The restrictions I refer to are the manning of ships with British seamen, which is distinctly preserved; and I am, as it is now proposed, to be compelled to navigate my ships with dear British sailors, when by navigating under a foreign flag I could do it with cheap foreign sailors. I am perfectly certain, however, that British shipping to any considerable extent could never obtain a full supply of whole crews of foreign sailors, and if instead of taking one-fourth, as at present by law we may do, of foreign sailors, I were to take three-fourths, I feel certain that it would only be by the inducement of placing the foreign sailors in respect to wages and provisions on a level with British that I should obtain them; but that it would never be practicable for me to bring down a single British sailor to the low level of many foreign nations. I am equally certain that it would be hopeless to expect to induce whole crews of the cheap sailors of the north of Europe to expatriate themselves, and come into British employ; and the remedy would appear to me so much easier and more effectual to transfer my capital and sail out of a foreign country having at the same time all the advantages attendant upon navigating from this country. If we are to have free trade in navigation we must be exonerated from all those disabilities imposed on us by Sir James Graham's Merchant

* Confirmation to some extent may be seen at p. 107, *ante*.

† Introduced by Mr. Labouchere. Appendix, A.

Seamen's Act, many of the provisions of which operate practically as a most heavy burden upon British shipowners. If I am required in certain trades to carry a surgeon in my ship—if I am required to victual my seamen according to a scale which humanity may prescribe, but of which free trade can know nothing—if I am required, upon the complaint of a sailor in a foreign port, to call in a British consul to examine all my provisions, and to be compelled, upon his authority, to throw aside those to which he objects, and to procure, at any expense, others—if I am prevented from enforcing discipline by corporeal punishment, on the propriety of which I equally give no opinion—and if, in consequence of not having that power, I am driven to employ a larger number of sailors than my foreign competitor does employ, and am subjected to a great many other disabilities of varying character, from which foreign navigation is exempt,—it is impossible for me successfully to compete, nor should I attempt to do it by subjecting myself to those restrictions, when the easy and obvious mode of avoiding them would be that pointed out by Vice-Consul Hertslet, *viz.*, sailing under the flag of Prussia, or the stripes and stars of America. I know as a fact that while a British ship in a Prussian port is compelled to lock up her provisions, and not to feed her own crew with British provisions, in order that they may be compelled to purchase those of Prussia, Prussian ships expend in this port, to which my personal knowledge extends, scarcely anything whatever. An instance has fallen under my observation within the last week or two which illustrates that point very unanswerably. A Dutch ship, named the *Nieuw Nekkerland*, arrived from Batavia, and delivered her cargo in London. She required a new mizen-mast, and I saw within the last few days a Dutch galliot alongside that ship, which had been despatched to Holland, from whence she brought the new mizen-mast, together with all the stores and provisions required for the outward voyage, even to the salt for the captain's table. The expenditure of foreign ships is always limited to the least possible amount. It is really so insignificant that it is a branch of trade I am not at all anxious for. I believe they never spend a farthing which they can avoid.

“ The reparation of ships in the northern ports of England is cheaper than in London. Labour is considerably cheaper. The wages of shipwrights' labour are kept up in London by a combination among the men; but I am far from thinking 6s. a day for a working shipwright, taking all circumstances into consideration, an excessive amount. Very good shipwrights at Boulogne work for 1s. 6d. a day. I do not think they are equally good with the London shipwrights; but taking the quality of their work I should think certainly it is cheaper by one-half. I have built ships for foreigners. I constructed the

steam frigate *Hecla* for the Danish Government, and I built a small steamer for a Danish Company, but never a sailing vessel. There was a Spanish frigate built by Mr. Wigram, but, I believe, never a merchant ship.

" In my prices of ships I gave as an approximate calculation £.1 extra for each additional year of classification. A vessel classing as A 1, 10, built at £.12, would require to cost, to make it one year more, £.13 a ton, and to make it two years more, £.14. The standard that I have always assumed for depreciation is a deduction of ten per cent. from the original value, making that deduction upon a continually reducing amount. I have heard it almost uniformly contended by those to whose opinions I am opposed, when it has been proved that the cost of a foreign ship is less than that of a British ship, that the disadvantage of cost is compensated by the better quality. In order to test that assumption I have taken the first 300 ships of British build that I found recorded in Lloyd's Registry-book for 1840, and I find that their duration averages $13\frac{6}{10}$ years, and that the first 300 foreign ships of all classes average $11\frac{96}{100}$ years; but there are four ships the ages of which are not ascertained. I find that the first 100 Baltic ships average $13\frac{8}{10}$ years, and that the duration of the first 100 North American-built ships averages $6\frac{6}{10}$ years. If it could be shown that shipowners preferred higher class ships to inferior ships it might be presumed that there was more economy in building dear ships; but it can be proved that shipowners do not build dear ships more extensively than cheap ones. The number of British ships building at this moment, and that have been for some years past, has been in a far greater proportion of cheap ships, classing low, than of dear ships to which a high class is given. This is proved by the following statement of new ships classed in Lloyd's Registry-book in the years ending 1st June 1840 and 1st June 1848, distinguishing the periods for which the ships were severally classed as A 1, and distinguishing also British-built from colonial-built ships:—

	1840.					1848.				
British-built, A 1	14	.	.	.	.	—	14	.	.	1
"	13	.	.	.	.	—	13	.	.	18
"	12	.	.	.	.	179	12	.	.	92
"	11	.	.	.	.	39	11	.	.	14
"	10	.	.	.	.	90	10	.	.	55
"	9	.	.	.	.	94	9	.	.	62
"	8	.	.	.	.	151	8	.	.	121
"	7	.	.	.	.	144	7	.	.	71
"	6	.	.	.	.	111	6	.	.	40
"	5	.	.	.	.	68	5	.	.	28

	1840.	1848.
British-built, A 1	4 23	4 14
,,	3 6	3 3
,,	2 1	2
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	906	519
North American colonial-built ships:		
Classed from 3 to 7 years	. . 158	. 124
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	1,059	648
Classed 10 years and upwards	808	180
Classed less than 10 years	751	468
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	1,059	648

“ It is an utterly fallacious mode of reasoning to argue that from the low character which foreign ships have in Lloyd's books they are intrinsically of that comparatively worthless description. I am satisfied that a well-built Baltic ship which stands seven years in Lloyd's book is a very much better ship than a British-built seven years' ship. My opinion is, that if Lloyd's Committee could form a just estimate of their value many would have a higher class; and there is one rather remarkable fact corroborative of that. The American liners, which are considered the very best of American ships, could not by our rules under any circumstances stand more than ten years, and most of them not more than nine. I believe we have not one of them in Lloyd's books, because they complain that by our rules great injustice is done them with reference to their actual quality, and they will not subject themselves to that which they think an unmerited degradation.

“ Among the various errors, as I conceive, that prevail on the subject of the Navigation Laws I think there is none which has been more extensive than that of supposing that we compete successfully with foreign nations in the export trade. My belief is, but it is a matter unsusceptible of demonstrative proof, that a very large proportion indeed of the export trade from this country to those countries in which foreign shipping is in competition with us devolves upon foreign shipping, and that we have very little of it. I know that almost the whole of the British-manufactured goods shipped at Liverpool for the United States is carried in American ships. I know that in consequence of the differential duties charged by the Spanish law on imports in British ships, shipments to Cuba are made exclusively in Spanish bottoms, with the exception of some rough goods to which their discriminating duties do not apply, and such I believe to be the fact in reference to all other countries with which we are in direct competition. Custom-house clearances are fallacious inasmuch as ships that clear out clear equally whether they have five tons of cargo on board or 500, and ships are even compelled to clear if they take the

stores for the supply of their crews out of bond. Thus a ship without a single ton of goods on board may appear in a Custom-house return, not as a ship in ballast, but as though she were loaded with cargo. The United States contrive to secure for their own ships the carriage both of exports and imports. I know a case at the present moment in which there is an order in this country for the shipment of a large quantity of iron for the American market; and I have been told by the shipper that if I were to offer to take the iron for half the freight that would be paid upon it by an American ship, he would not be at liberty to entertain the proposition. My informant is a British iron-master. An American merchant sends the order, and the goods go almost exclusively in American ships. Americans have two-thirds of the imports into this country from America and I believe nine-tenths* of the exports. My calculation is based upon the information I have received from every shipper of goods from this country to the American market with whom I am acquainted, and that acquaintance is somewhat extensive.

"The freight of articles imported from distant countries very little, if at all, affects the selling price of those articles in this market, which price is almost entirely regulated by the proportion between supply and demand in the market at the time. The supply that is to meet the demand will not, I think, be regulated in any degree by the freight, because no arrangements that can be made with distant countries can keep freights at anything like a regular level; they will constantly fluctuate in distant ports, according to the supply of tonnage at those ports, and no pre-arrangements can regulate them. They do in fact fluctuate in an extraordinary degree. I have known at Bombay, within a period of three months, cotton to be shipped at 15s. a ton, and at £.4 a ton. The greater portion of the articles to which I refer are not shipped to order for this country, but are shipped by the producer or by the purchasing merchant in the foreign port, who makes his shipment at a rate proportionately lower if he has to pay a higher rate of freight, and conversely. He gives a less price for the article when freight is high. The prices of such commodities in shipping ports invariably, as far as my experience has gone, rise as the freights decline, and fall as the freights rise.

"I observe among the inconveniences supposed to result from the Navigation Laws, alleged by witnesses examined before the Committee of the House of Commons, there was one strongly dwelt upon by Mr. Brown, who stated that the restriction imposed by the Navigation Laws upon the employment of Lascars in the navigation of ships from India had had the effect of preventing a very large proportion of East India country ships

* See p. 158 for a corroboration of this statement.

from finding employment in the trade with this country ; and instanced the case of a ship called the *Earl Balcarras*. But it is a remarkable fact, that, in the case of the *Earl Balcarras*, Mr. Brown applied to the Treasury to be released from the obligation of taking out British seamen to navigate the ship to India ; and by a Treasury order of the 17th of September 1840, that ship was permitted to clear out for India with her then ship's company, and without the number of British seamen required by law. Mr. Brown stated that the ship had to take out the British seamen to India, and that the owner wrote home to the agents to the effect that it was the last time he would send a ship and cargo to England ; but the fact I still believe to be as I have stated it. I have seen a copy of the Treasury order*. I believe Mr. Brown to be a most respectable man, and I do not mean for a moment to insinuate that he has intentionally given incorrect evidence. The case of cotton in Havre is very familiar, and of cochineal and some hides from Buenos Ayres. With regard to cochineal, I admit there is an inconvenience ; but I am of opinion that it would not be difficult to remedy it without any infraction of the principle of the Navigation Laws. The year 1846 is cited as that in which the inconvenience with regard to cochineal was felt ; but in that year seven British and six Spanish ships came from Teneriffe to this country ; and I have also the quantity of cochineal that came consigned to Mr. Houghton, who made the complaint, taken from the manifests at the Custom-house, and it is very small. I think that every proved inconvenience to commerce that can be removed without particular injury to British navigation ought to be removed ; and I am of opinion that the cases cited, as well as many other cases of real grievance, would be effectually remedied, and in strict accordance with the principle of the Navigation Laws, by introducing into the third clause of the Navigation Act the same principle with respect to the produce of the distant quarters of the world as that which regulates by the second clause the importations from Europe ; namely, by the limitation of the restriction to certain articles to be specifically enumerated ; the enumerated articles being made to comprise all those bulky commodities the retention of the importation of which to British shipping I hold to be of the last importance to British navigation, while the surrender of the remainder would not materially affect British maritime commerce, and ought, therefore, I think, to be conceded to the convenience of general commerce. The advantage of the direct voyage is the great point ; and I am firmly convinced that the interest of the consumer is in the long run equally secured with that of the shipowner, by giving the encouragement afforded by the Navigation Act to direct importation rather than in-

* See Mr. Scott's evidence, *post*.

direct, for if that were abrogated, importations would take place to a considerable extent from the distant ports of the world into the near ports of the European continent, there to be warehoused; and the people of this country would then consume, in no inconsiderable proportion, the productions of tropical climates, saddled with all the expenses of previous importation into the ports of Continental nations, in addition to what we now pay.

" I believe that, taking the whole course of our trade, the captains of many foreign ships are better than many in our own ships. The whole of our system with respect to sailors, masters, and officers of merchant ships is susceptible of considerable improvement.

" With respect to the price of foreign ships, I have a letter from Gefle, Gulf of Bothnia, dated 3rd June, to this effect:— ' There are here eight vessels on the stocks, of from 110 to 260 lasts burden; all but one are copper-fastened, and all built of fir or yellow pine. The price of these ships ready for sea, with two suits of sails, boats, rigging, &c. about £.14 per last of 18 skeppund, or 6800 Swedish lbs.' I believe the last here described to be about 2½ tons English. ' There is also a copper-fastened schooner here for sale; she is 160 great lasts, two and a half years old; the owner asks 22,000 R. G. Ds. (about £.1190) for her. She is well built, of good materials, and sails well. The price, though not high, can be lowered. I am informed that in and about Sundswall there are not less than 13 vessels on the stocks, of various dimensions, most of them copper-fastened. The ship-builder here says that he will build ships for about, not over, £.7 per great last, copper-fastened, including all spars, boats, wood-work, &c. The rigging and fitting up same ships he calculates at the same amount per last; so that a vessel of 120 lasts (more than 255 tons) would cost, ready for sea, £.1680 sterling (uncoppered), at most, which is £.6 11s. 9d. per ton. Wages to ship-carpenters here are 18d. per day for a first rate, 11d. a second, and 9d. per day to rough hands; they find themselves tools, board and lodging, &c. I suppose that further north the price is a little less, as the house rent is not so high. Seamen's wages from this place to foreign parts are, able seamen, per month, 24s.; ordinary ditto, 17s. 6d.; ditto (new) 14s. 4d.; mates, 32s.; second mates, 25s. 6d.; wages to captains according to abilities, and differ much; common wages are 25 rixdollars, or 40s. per month.' This information completely tallies with that which I have received from various quarters.

" As far as the shipowner is personally concerned, there is no doubt that a permission to him to buy a foreign ship would go far to remove the objection urged to the increased cost of ships of British construction; but I would venture to press earnestly on your Lordships' consideration the consequences that would

follow in regard to the great injury, approaching the destruction, of British shipbuilding, from such a regulation. The wages of British shipwrights are in some degree kept up by a combination among themselves. The power to employ foreign ships would have the effect of breaking up the combination, if it succeeded ; but it would break the hearts of and destroy the people themselves. It should be borne in mind that their rate of wages has been to my knowledge 6s. a day for the last 30 years, notwithstanding the fluctuations in the price of provisions. We have had a very high price of provisions, and at times under circumstances which would have enabled the workmen to have raised the wages, and still they have remained at the same rate of 6s. a day. I do not think the rate of wages high, as compared with the wages of other skilled artisans. Take the case of cotton spinners. Mr. Porter states, in his 'Progress of the Nation,' that the wages of cotton spinners in Manchester are 42s. 9d. per week, which is 7s. per diem ; and I cannot therefore think that the shipwright is paid a higher rate of wages than he is fairly entitled to. From the nature of their occupation shipwrights are liable to great interruption from the state of the weather, and there is great hazard and fluctuation in their employment. I believe the average receipts of shipwrights in London do not throughout the year exceed 4s. per diem.

" It has been proved that the capital invested in trades connected with British shipping exceeds £16,000,000 sterling. The annual cost of shipbuilding is upwards of £3,000,000 ; the yearly expenditure in repairs and outfits £8,000,000 ; and 80,000 workmen are calculated to be employed, whose earnings amount to £5,000,000 sterling per annum. If shipbuilding were discouraged in this country I am also at a loss to know from whence we could derive a supply of carpenters for our ships, or where shipwrights could be obtained to supply, as they frequently do, the royal dockyards in cases of emergency. I would only in conclusion say, that I cannot help thinking this great question has been too much discussed with reference to small details, rather than upon a broad and comprehensive view of it in all its great bearings ; and I beg to repeat that it is my conviction that the great principle of the Navigation Laws in encouraging the direct importation of articles of consumption into this country by British ships is not only an object of great national policy as regards naval defence, but that it does in the long run greatly contribute to the interest of the consumer, and that the whole community is therefore interested in maintaining the principle of the Navigation Laws.

Joshua Wilson, Esq., a merchant and shipowner, and also a retail and wholesale grocer, carrying on business in Sunderland, stated :—

“ We have five ships averaging about 250 tons, perhaps not so much. I consider the Navigation Laws most decidedly injurious to the mercantile interests of the country, as well as to the shipping interests. Our firm has not felt very much direct inconvenience from them, because our direct import trade is principally from North America and the northern countries of Europe, but indirectly we have felt it. When Lord John Russell took off the discriminating duties on sugar, and allowed all foreign sugars to be imported at the same rate of duty, a very large portion of the sugar in this country was brought by foreign ships, but which could not be admitted for home consumption owing to the Navigation Laws. The difference in price between that brought in British ships and that brought in foreign ships, the one being admissible for home consumption, and the other inadmissible, was about 6s. per cwt., and it raised the price of sugar 6s. at that time and until the merchants made arrangements, and the importations in British ships brought the prices more on a level. If it had not been for our Navigation Laws all those sugars that were selling at that time at 6s. a cwt. less than the sugars admissible for home consumption would have been admitted at the same rate of duty, and we could have imported sugars direct from the Continent. There were at that time large stocks of sugar in Holland and at different ports of the Continent. I do not recollect the exact year I am speaking of. It might have been 1846; it was the first session after Lord John Russell came into the ministry. We considered we should be allowed to export those sugars as stores, and therefore their price being lower than the others tempted us; but we found that there was a Custom-house order prohibiting their export as stores, and we had them left on hand. We could export them to foreign countries; but we have a small quantity, and are keeping them in hopes that these restrictions will be removed, and then we would rather keep them at home. Our object was to export those sugars as supplies for ships. We have a trade in that line; but were stopped all at once by the Custom-house officers, and had to buy fresh sugars for that purpose. I consider that if the Navigation Laws were repealed goods from the tropical climates which are now sent direct to the Continent would be sent to London; but they are not sent to London now, because the parties know that they have not the chance of a home market for them. Large quantities of sugars and coffees and other produce would be warehoused in London, and from thence exported to the Continent, the same as they are sent coastwise

to places in England. There is no deficiency of sugar, because the merchants, since that period to which I have alluded, have made arrangements and imported more sugar in British ships than is wanted. London is now the best market. Foreign sugars are now sent in British vessels to this country, in order that they may be admitted for home consumption at the low duty, consequently, from the large supply, it attracts customers from the Continent; and I have understood that Hamburg merchants visit this market perhaps nearly as often as we Sunderland merchants do, to purchase sugars and other produce of that description; and if the same chance were given for goods imported in foreign ships, then the foreign ships, instead of landing their goods at Hamburg, would land them in London, and it would be more of an entrepôt for Europe than it is at present. My opinion is, that England being the greatest market for consumption in high-priced articles, such as tea, coffee, and sugar, the difference of warehouse rent between this and the Continent is such a trifle that the parties would prefer taking their chance of the English market, and would send them to England, and from thence export them to the Continent, rather than first send them to the Continent, and thence export them to England. Warehouse rent is much lower in Sunderland than in London; but merchants would never think of importing cargoes of sugar and this description of produce into Sunderland.

" I consider that if the Navigation Laws were repealed, and the shipowners did not know anything of it, they would not find any difference at all in the rate of freight. My opinion is, that the result would follow of a gradual increase of freight (but it would be so slow as to be scarcely perceptible), because these restrictions stop trade; they make less interchange of commodities between one country and another, and therefore they cause less carrying trade than there otherwise would be; and I am fully persuaded that the British shipowner can compete in shipping with every other country. I consider that we are able to build better ships for the money in Sunderland, to sail as fast as the American liners, and that we could sail them with as few hands, supposing they had such men as we have in Sunderland. I have studied the question most as a shipowner's question.

In opening a fresh field to our shipowners we should also open a fresh field of competition to American ships; but I am of opinion that British could compete with American ships. If the laws were repealed foreigners would be allowed to trade between this country and the colonies, and to bring Cuba and Brazilian sugars to England as well as goods coming from any part of the world; and in that case the English merchant would have the ships that happened to be at the port and most readily available to bring his produce. Apart from all questions of shipping, looking only to the general interests of trade, I con-

sider that it would be of great advantage to the general commerce of the country. Our merchants, when the market was glutted here with any particular article, would send it to Antwerp, Rotterdam, Amsterdam, or Hamburg, in order to try to sell it there if possible; but now they know that if they once send it out of England they cannot bring it back again. I consider that if our ports were open without any restriction to the shipping of all countries England would be more than ever the entrepôt for the goods of all the world, and that it would be an advantage to the merchant and proprietor in the West Indies if they had the power of employing any shipping they pleased, foreign or British*. I am not very conversant with the West India trade.

“ The aggregate increase of American is greater than the increase of British tonnage. There is perfect reciprocity between the two countries in the direct trades. American shipping has increased under that reciprocity. In return for the advantages which we should give the American by opening our colonial trade, we should gain the privilege of getting freights from various ports of this country to America. Perhaps he might avail himself of the advantages of the China trade. He likely might bring teas from China to this country. I think the reciprocity between American and English shipping trading to this country is only in regard to shipping charges; but, with regard to articles of export and import, there are restrictions resulting from Navigation Laws on both sides, which restrictions give the Americans, I consider, a most decided advantage in the trade between this country and America. I should not despair, if the Navigation Laws were repealed, of seeing a British line of packets competing with the Americans between Liverpool and America; and I conceive it is very probable that we might export large quantities of tea from this country to America, and *vice versa*. The freight of tea bears a very small proportion of its value. I would consider retaliation a very heavy blow to the shipping interest of this country.

“ I consider if foreigners were admitted into the coasting trade very few indeed would take advantage of it. The remuneration of shipping employed in the coasting trade is less than of that employed in the trade between this country and Pittsburgh, and Prussia, &c. Therefore I conceive that in summer time foreigners would not desert their own trades to come into the coasting trade. We have a large export of coal to Hamburg from Sunderland and the neighbouring ports, and some to Holland and France. Now our Navigation Laws admit foreigners into that trade, and yet we find we have the great bulk of it in our own hands. The next question is,

* See evidence of Messieurs Bosanquet, Ellice, M'Chlery, Davidson, Sandbach, Bouch, Hankey, Shand, Booker, &c., *post*.

whether Prussian ships, when their own ports are frozen up, will come into the coasting trade and carry coals from Sunderland to London. I conceive they will not. It is a time when there is a large supply of British ships at home, and consequently freights are reduced; and it is a consideration with the shipowner whether he will send his ship with coals or lay her up for the winter season. It is the custom in our coal ports for the sailors, when the vessel is in port, to live on shore; but if the Prussian had a cargo of coals in for London the crew would have to live on board, and at this time of the year I have known our own vessels have frequently been detained a month in the harbour with strong easterly winds, so that they could not get to sea; the Prussian crew would be living on board all that time, and I conceive that with the month's pay going on and the expense of provisions it would eat out much more than the profit of the voyage. It is my decided opinion that we can undersell the Prussians in any portion of our trade.

"A large portion of the timber imported from Prussia to this country is in foreign bottoms. There is some of it in British; but the great bulk of the Swedish and Norwegian trade, particularly the Norwegian, has been in foreign bottoms. The alteration of the timber duties has very much increased the Baltic timber trade, more particularly as regards the timber for shipbuilding. It has cheapened the price of Baltic timber more than of Baltic deals. I do not think it has had any great effect upon the trade with Canada, because most of the Canadian timber is used for other purposes; and if the duty on the Baltic timber were wholly repealed, I, as a timber merchant, would give similar orders. I have some orders out to America now; I would not cancel one of them. The price of Dantzic oak plank in 1836 was £3 10s. a load at Dantzic, in 1839 it was £4, and in 1847 it was £4 10s. The duty in 1839 was £4 a load, and it is now, since the 5th of this month, reduced to £1; therefore the shipowner will be buying that timber £2 10s. a load cheaper. The price of timber at Dantzic has increased 10s. since the alteration of the duties. I do not know that that rise has been caused by the reduction of duty. This oak plank has been found exceedingly useful in building ships; I consider it to approach as nearly to English oak plank as anything we have. If the price of timber at Dantzic were raised it would also raise the price of shipbuilding there, and I consider that if the duties were wholly repealed the foreigner would have less advantage. We beat him now in shipbuilding, and should beat him more if it were not for this timber duty.

"Whenever there is any rise in freights the foreigner comes in and takes advantage of it, and thereby reaps the advantage which the British shipowner would otherwise get. But it tells two ways: it causes less fluctuation in freights, because when

freights are low foreigners withdraw their ships, and when freights are high and there is a deficiency of tonnage they rush in to supply it. I consider that if shipowners could keep their freights at a general level, with a slight fluctuation, it would be much better for their interest. After the excessively high freights of last year we are likely to have exceedingly low freights this year. The rise of freights is a proof of the insufficiency of shipping, which is supplied by the foreign shipping; and then when there is a surplus and freights decline the foreigners are the first to withdraw. I consider that a proof that the foreigners cannot compete with very great facility with English ships. The Prussians have no Navigation Laws; their shipping is not increasing very rapidly. In the last year the shipping of Sunderland increased more than that of Prussia. The Prussians had 53 more vessels on the 1st of January 1848 than in the previous year, and Sunderland 74 more vessels. The tonnage of Sunderland is much greater than of Prussia. Prussian vessels do not make their voyages in as short a time as British vessels. We had a vessel which passed the Sound last autumn for Sunderland, and there were two Prussian vessels, which, I think, passed about a day before; one of the Prussian vessels got in about five or six days after our vessel. I may state that the winds were contrary, and the weather very stormy. The second Prussian vessel put into Norway, and did not arrive until our vessel had discharged her cargo at Sunderland, and taken in a cargo of coals at that place for London; and I think the day the coals were discharged at London the Prussian vessel came to Sunderland. I may also add that the Prussian vessel was larger than ours, and consequently more able to bear the buffeting of the sea in stormy weather. That instance might have arisen from accidental circumstances. British ships are sometimes detained in the same way; but I consider as a general rule that British ships make their passages much quicker than Prussian ships.

"Sunderland is the cheapest building port in Great Britain; that trade is at present very much depressed. The ship-carpenters and shipwrights struck work several months since, in order to keep up their rate of wages; those at work are getting 4s. 6d. a day. The agitation of this question of the Navigation Laws is, I understand, doing harm in Sunderland. Shipowners do not like to invest money in ships at the present moment. There are many persons of my opinion at Sunderland with regard to the Navigation Laws. There are several shipowners who have signed the petition for the repeal of the Navigation Laws to be presented to the Commons; it has not been presented yet. Of the working classes *I believe that a public meeting could not be called to support the Navigation Laws. I do not think they could call a public meeting where they would obtain a majority in favour of them.*

" We do not find the inconveniences of the apprenticeship regulation to be exceedingly great, but there are several attending it. I consider that whether the Navigation Laws are repealed or not, it is an unnecessary burden upon ship-owners. Before the ticket system and the Apprenticeship Act we always gave a boy a trial voyage or two before we bound him ; but now we are obliged to indenture him to get the seaman's ticket, and perhaps the sea does not suit him, and he runs away ; so that I consider we should get a better set of men, and be much less inconvenienced, if there were no regulations interfering with apprentices, and that we should employ nearly the same number of apprentices that we do. Some prefer all men, and others a larger proportion of apprentices than the law allows. If left free we should take the number which suited us ; perhaps, if wages were low, in times of depression, we should employ more men and less apprentices, and so the men would get berths on board English ships, and would not run away so much to America. I think one of the effects of the system is, that it feeds the American instead of our service. I consider that the apprentices we are obliged to take increases the number of men, although, as I have before remarked, in our own employment I consider we had as many apprentices perhaps before as since. It is my opinion that the establishment of the Registry Office is one of the causes that has led to more stringent rules.

" All our ships go on the temperance principle. A friend of mine made me out an account of the expense of his vessel on an American voyage, and he said they never took any spirits or beer on board. We allow them a little more tea and coffee. In foreign voyages we get bonded stores, and allow tea and coffee instead of beer and spirits : men like it much better. They prefer it much to having spirits, because the captain would often take the spirits himself, and not serve it out to the men. Good men enter readily. The French Government make it a condition in their contracts for a supply of coal from Sunderland, that it shall be conveyed in French vessels very frequently. They have had to pay higher freights. I have heard of 4s. 6d. a ton being given extra in a freight of coal from Sunderland to Algiers ; and I think to some ports it is 1s. 6d. a ton. It has cost them several hundred thousands in a year. The Government gives an extra freight to encourage French ships ; they get no more employment through it, but the Government loses a considerable sum of money. The French commercial marine I think the most bolstered up and protected of any in the world. We had a circular from Prussia, stating that in the last year there had been a scarcity of vessels for England, but a much greater scarcity for France, because the French had no ships adapted to the trade. Most of the Prussian vessels being engaged in the grain trade to England, there was a great

scarcity of ships for timber. They cannot compete with us in the coal trade. We carry the great bulk of their coals to France. The bounty only goes as far as certain Government contracts. The Government very frequently allow English ships to carry the coals, because they find great difficulty in getting them conveyed by French ships. I consider the state of the French commercial marine a proof that the maritime superiority of this country is not owing to the Navigation Laws, but to the energy and skill of the captains and sailors, and enterprise of the merchants. I do not consider they have been of the least advantage, but that they have injured the commerce of this country and the shipping interest at all periods of their existence. That is my opinion. I am not very particularly acquainted with their history. I speak as a shipowner. I consider that the greater interchange of merchandise there is between one country and another, the more employment there will be for me as a shipowner. Being a member of the Society of Friends the military part of the question is rather out of my line; but I consider that if these laws were repealed there would be greater employment for British ships, and, consequently, more sailors. I would prefer a repeal of the Law to our present state; but I would prefer reciprocity to either. Supposing the Navigation Laws were to be repealed, and France still continue to insist upon her Navigation Laws, I consider we should be placed in a much more advantageous position than that in which we are now placed; for vessels could then go and bring goods from France to England; but if France did not choose then to meet us by reciprocity, but chose to put a differential duty upon the cargoes brought in British ships and those brought in French ships, we should be in a similar position as we are now; we should not be in a worse position. But I consider the repeal of the Navigation Laws would still do the British shipowners good, because we should be allowed to bring goods from France, which we are not now allowed to do. I am not of opinion that it would be necessary, in the event of a repeal of the Navigation Laws, to force upon the Continental powers a reciprocity. If the powers of Europe should place differential duties upon British shipping, I would remonstrate with them, but I would not retaliate. I consider they would injure themselves more than they would injure us; and that the French are injuring themselves by their protective duties more than they are injuring us. If the Navigation Laws were repealed, and the warehousing system proved to be cheaper in Holland, possibly I might send sugars to be warehoused in Holland; but it would require a fresh connexion. We are accustomed in those things to deal with our own countrymen, and it would take a great deal of time to get out of the regular beaten track of trade. I also conceive that if any great advance in the sugar market took place, foreign merchants

would send for goods to the Continent, and bring them to England. If we were to have the prices more equalized there would be a much greater interchange, I conceive, between this country and the Continent. I consider that an English merchant, finding the market overstocked with an article, would be much more likely to send it to the Continent, if he knew he could bring it back again, than now, when he knows he cannot do so.

" We built a vessel in Sunderland in the year 1824, named the *Hendon*; she is 218 tons old measurement and 208 tons new measurement. The hull cost £.1750, and the outfit £.876, altogether £.2626. I think she would stand about eight years. It was before the present regulation for the classification of ships came up. In the year 1842 and 1843 there were very great failures amongst the shipbuilders in the port of Sunderland. Many working shipwrights have set up to be masters; and when there are those great reactions, some who have had no capital to begin with are not able to meet the storm, and fail. A large portion of them are little better than labouring men. I consider the British shipowner is not at all heavily taxed in direct taxes. The timber duty is the only tax which presses on him, which I conceive ought to be repealed, because it not only raises the price of foreign timber, but in a corresponding degree raises the price of English and colonial timber. The price of English oak is in some measure regulated by the price at which we can import foreign oak. Now the price of foreign oak is increased by the amount of duty that is levied on the importation, therefore I consider that it causes an extra cost of say 15s. on the square timber, and 20s. per load in plank, English as well as foreign, that the shipowner has to pay in building his ships; but I do not know another article which is worth mentioning that is taxed of which the ship is built. Colonial timber and Indian teak are admitted almost duty free. The duty on African oak is not more than 1s. per load. I consider that the light dues press very heavily on the shipowner. About twice as much money is collected for the lights as they cost, and this money is expended in various ways. I consider it very unfair that Government vessels and pleasure yachts should be able to pass these lights, and the shipowner pay duty for the whole. Only half the money collected from light dues is appropriated to the maintenance of the lights, and the other half goes in charity and other ways. It would be a great relief to the trade if these light dues could be reduced. If we want to bring a few goods from London we have to consider whether it will pay the light dues, which a ship in ballast does not pay, and a few tons of goods will make her liable. I cannot say that the shipowners would be willing to contribute anything towards the support of decayed seamen; but I am connected with the parish of Sunderland, where a great many of the old sailors receive

Trinity money, and the parish would have to pay more if the men did not get that money. We ought not to pay more for the lights than they really cost, and the tax should be reduced as the number of vessels passing the light increases.

“ I do not consider the seamen's register-ticket system of any benefit to the shipowner. A ship goes out to America, and there are a number of new vessels built, we will say, at Quebec to be brought to England; they offer high wages to the sailors to bring them home. The sailor runs away from his ship, and perhaps makes ten pounds extra per voyage by coming over to England. He goes before a magistrate; he has lost his ticket, and perhaps he lets out that he ran away from his ship; he claims a new ticket, and is fined 10s.; he laughs at it, and gets a new ticket. Another thing; a sailor loses his register-ticket, it gives him a greater temptation to enter the American service rather than come to be fined and claim a fresh ticket in the British service. I consider the system of no use, but injurious.

“ I consider the principle on which the Navigation Laws are founded, that is, of attempting to improve the British marine and depressing foreigners, to be contrary to the Christian precept, which enjoins us to do unto others as we would be done by, and I believe that nothing opposed to this Christian policy can be of any utility, or promote the happiness or the well-being of any country; therefore I consider that if the Navigation Laws were repealed, it would be beneficial to both the mercantile, manufacturing, and shipping interests of the country, and would tend to allay those petty jealousies between one nation and another, from which wars have their origin, and to unite in one brotherhood all nations as the children of one common parent.”

Thomas Boyes Simey, Esq., Lloyd's Surveyor at the port of Sunderland, stated:—

“ I have been a shipbuilder and commander of a ship in the foreign service. I am perfectly acquainted with the trade and shipping of Sunderland. The number of ships and men registered at that port, according to a Return from the Custom-house running over a period of the last five years, commencing in 1842, shows that in 1842 there were 869 ships comprising a tonnage of 173,170, and navigated by 7,299 men; in 1843, 833 ships, tonnage 166,044, navigated by 7,025 men; in 1844, 828 ships, tonnage 164,592, navigated by 6,991 men; in 1845, 843 ships, tonnage 170,518, navigated by 7,238 men; in 1846, 870 ships, tonnage 178,584, navigated by 7,598 men; and in 1847 there were 944 ships, tonnage 192,057, navigated by 8,196 men. Sunderland is considered the fourth shipping port

in the kingdom. The whole number of ships built from 1834 to 1847 in Sunderland is 2,057, the tonnage 549,271, and the average tonnage is 217*1*². The freightage of the port I estimate at about one million and a half annually, and the capital annually required to cover the operations of shipbuilding, outfitting, &c., nearly half a million. I have taken some pains to get out a statement of the cost of building and fitting ships for sea, and I have the opinions of men who have been in business for many years in Sunderland, and who carry on their business with a due regard to the discharge of their engagements, and are desirous of making for themselves a small profit. The first Return I have is from Messrs. S. P. Austin and Co. For a hull of 12 or 13 years' class, from 300 to 600 tons, £12 10s. to £14 per ton. For the hull: ten years' ships, £11; nine years', £8 10s.; eight years', £7 10s.; seven years', £6 10s. In addition to the above, the cost for rigging and general fitting out is from £3 to £4 per ton. Ships intended for the East India service require larger outfits than vessels in the Baltic and home trade. Hence arises the difference of price in the outfit. For 13 years, a ship is required to have no iron bolts exteriorly; she must be fastened with treenails and copper bolts only, or she cannot class higher than 12 years. For 14 years she must have no treenails outside; must be fastened entirely with copper, or Muntz's metal. In the 10 years' ship it is not required that she should be copper-fastened at all. But for the money I have stated the ship would be copper-fastened. Copper sheathing would occasion an extra charge of about £1 or £1 3s. per ton on each vessel. The outfit of £3 to £4 does not include nautical instruments. A telescope is generally found and a compass; but charts, quadrants, chronometer, or things of that kind, are provided by the captain.

"I have another paper; a letter from Messrs. E. W. and W. J. Hall and Co., who are shipbuilders in the port of Sunderland:—'We beg to hand you the prices at which we have stated different class vessels, viz., eight years A 1 at Lloyd's, at £11 per ton.' This includes the outfit, the Committee will bear in mind. 'Nine years ditto, at £12 10s. per ton, outfitted for a Baltic voyage.' That would take in the smallest sum I gave of £3; and the other ship going to India would cost £4. 'It is now' (he says) 'some years since we built a vessel to class ten years A 1 at Lloyd's. At the present time we could not engage to do so for less than £13 10s. outfitted as above' (for a Baltic voyage). From my own knowledge with regard to the price of shipbuilding I corroborate those statements having regard to a fair profit arising from the transaction. Ships have been sold lower in the port of Sunderland, but the result has generally been very disastrous to the parties. At present we have 50 yards going in the port of Sunderland. In the years 1838, 1839, and 1840 there were 756 sail of vessels

built in that port, averaging about 250 sail per annum. During those three years there were about 80 shipbuilders at work, and immediately after that very enormous quantity of shipbuilding a great many failed, in consequence of the ships having been sold too cheap. As a matter of course, the trade in the next year or two was reduced from 263 to 85. The average before those years was over 100. Of course, a great deal depends upon the demand. On turning to the list of failures it plainly shows that the trade of the port had been carried on at worse than no profit. The shipbuilders in the port of Sunderland are not generally men of capital. It is a struggle between small profits and ruin. Even in the year 1847 and this year a great number of failures have taken place; eight already have failed, and several others are nearly in the same position.

" I have two Returns from shipbuilders in Sunderland. One is by Mr. Lawson Yates, and is a Return of labour on four ships. The first is the barque *Globe*, launched in March 1848, with half poop, classed ten years A 1, 310 tons, 332 tons new measurement. Carpenters, sawyers, smiths, labourers, and apprentices' labour amounting to £.626 2s. 10d.; and for joiners and apprentices, £.84 19s. 5d.; making altogether about £.2 6s. per ton on that vessel for those branches of labour. The next vessel is one called the *Black Friar*, launched in January 1848, classed ten years A 1; is 524 tons, 621 new measurement; and for the same labour cost £.1,168 5s. 2d., which amounts to £.2 8s. per ton, on the old tonnage. These are ten years' ships; they have full poops and top-gallant forecastles, which of course increases the expense very materially. The next is a flush-deck, called the *Snow Jane*, launched in June 1847, classed nine years A 1, 310 tons, 336 new measurement; the amount of labour on her is £.652 18s. 5d., or £.2 2s. per ton. The next, called the *Express*, launched in July 1846, classed eight years A 1, 263 tons, 266 tons new measurement; labour, £.513, rather under £.2 per ton. The other Return is from Messrs. Austin and Co.; their labour seems to be higher; for a 12 years' ship it is from £.3 to £.3 5s. per ton; a nine years' ship, £.2 10s.; and for a seven years' ship, £.2. The price of shipwright labour coeval with those charges was 4s. 6d. a day, with allowances at different stages of the vessel amounting to 6d. per day. As a surveyor I can verify the truth of those statements. The shipwrights who earn from 4s. to 4s. 6d. a day work steadily during six days in the week. It sometimes happens that they take three days' wages and three days' play, but not to any serious extent in Sunderland. When wages are very high (and I have known them as high as 5s. 6d.), the men are more inclined to enjoy themselves; but, generally speaking, they are a very steady class of men. The present price of English oak timber in Sunderland is from £.4 to £.4 5s. It depends on the size and quality of it; a great

deal on the quantity of sap in it, its growth and formation. African oak is from £.12 to £.14; that also has its value from its formation. Mahogany timber, of which a great deal has come into consumption in mercantile shipbuilding, is at present £.11 10s. a load in Sunderland; East India teak, £.15 per load. It has been introduced of late for planking, exterior and interior planking chiefly. Stettin oak is from £.4 15s. to £.5 per load; Hamburg, £.4 15s.; Memel, say £.4 per load; American elm, £.3 17s. 6d. to £.4 4s.; American oak, £.5 5s. to £.7 7s.; white pine, £.3 7s. 6d.; Dantzig plank, about £.8 a load. The freight from Dantzig in Prussian vessels is not more than 16s. or 18s.

"I have the cost of a vessel lately in the port of Hartlepool; a very fine ship, built at Bremen. She is called the *Ernst Maritz Arndt*, 399 Bremen lasts, or 636 English tons register, full-rigged, with a large roundhouse on deck. That is new measurement. She would be measured by the Custom-house authorities in England, and they only give the new register now. Her cabins were fitted in a very costly manner, as well as the rigging, sails, masts, &c. She was navigated by 20 men, including the captain. Cost, uncoppered, 35,000 Bremen dollars, equal to £.5700 sterling, or about £.9 per ton, without copper sheathing, including the outfit of the ship. The cost of coppering to 14 feet, 4,000 dollars, or £.650. She was calculated to carry 850 tons dead weight. This information was obtained from the captain, who was an intelligent man, and attended the vessel during the building. I have also the comparative cost of two vessels, British and Prussian, which I can give, as having come under my own observation in the year 1845. One was a Prussian vessel, the Stettin barque *Johanne l'Emilie*, of 304 tons register, and navigated with 12 men; and the other, an English brig, the *Milo*, of 338 tons, and navigated with 10 men and two boys. The captain of the Prussian ship told me that he had £.3 10s. a month, with perquisites, depending upon the freightage of the ship. The chief mate had £.3 10s., second mate £.1 10s., carpenter £.2, cook £.1. 10s., and 7 seamen at £.1 4s. each, amounting altogether to £.16 18s. per month, exclusive of the captain's wages. The dietary was as follows:—Sunday, 1lb. of beef, with gray peas and 1lb. of bread; Monday, $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. of pork, with pea soup and 1lb. of bread; 1lb. of bread was the daily allowance; Tuesday, same as Sunday; Wednesday, as Monday; Thursday, as Sunday; Friday, as Monday; Saturday, $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. of pork, with gruel made from barley; small beer for general use, and occasionally butter. The English vessel, *Milo*, of 308 tons, was navigated with 12 men, including boys. The captain had £.10 10s. a month, mate £.5, carpenter £.4 10s., second mate £.3, cook £.3, five seamen at £.2 15s. each, and two boys at 15s. a month each, amounting altogether to £.30 15s. as against £.16 18s. for the Prussian ship."

Mr. Simey was then questioned :—

“ The Committee would ask you this question—and they wish you to be particular, remembering that you are upon your oath—have you selected these cases as specially suiting your purpose ?”

To which he replied :—

“ No ; this statement was taken by accident. During the course of my duties in the River Wear I happened to be on board the Prussian ship, and I made these inquiries, and made a memorandum of the result at that time, namely, in the year 1845, and I have referred to it to bring here.

“ With respect to the probable effect of a repeal of the Navigation Laws my opinion is that it would be very injurious to the British shipping interest, and the feeling against the repeal of the Navigation Laws in Sunderland is almost universal. As a corroboration of that assertion, I have only to refer to the result of the last election in the town of Sunderland. That election hinged almost altogether upon the question of the Navigation Laws, inasmuch as the Whig candidate, Sir Hedworth Williamson, pledged himself to support the Navigation Laws as they now exist, and by that means gained a very large number of votes, and was returned by a triumphant majority. This took place in December 1847. I consider that if a meeting of the working classes were called in support of the Navigation Laws there would be a very powerful meeting. Up to the present time there have been nine petitions from the different trades dependent upon shipping already sent to the House of Commons against a repeal of the Navigation Laws, chiefly from workmen*. The Sunderland ships come in competition in the Baltic trade with the ships of Northern Europe under the reciprocity treaties, the effect of which is we have been almost entirely thrown out of the trade. I speak from my own experience. Before those treaties came into operation I was in command of a ship, and used frequently to trade to the ports of Prussia, and I have seen as many as 300 sail of British ships in the spring of the year in the port of Memel, and now I am pretty sure that you would not find 10 British ships at the same season of the year to bring timber away. According to a Return taken from the Custom-house in Sunderland, running over a period of ten years, from 1838 to 1847, we had from Sweden six British ships and six foreign, so that as regards imports into Sunderland that country is equal with us. From Norway we have two British and 98 foreign. From Denmark no British and 19 foreign. From Prussia 85 British and 221 foreign. From Hanover we have two British and six foreign. The principal part of the timber comes from those countries. Coal is carried

* See p. 140, *ante*.

to those ports by both British and foreign ships. With respect to the Hanse Towns, and France, and Holland, we have the majority in that trade; but we have latterly found that there has been an increase of foreign ships coming into this country, and taking coals to different parts of the world and to free ports. The Bremen ship, the particulars of which I gave, if built of Bremen timber, would only class 7 A 1 at Lloyd's. A ship classing 13 years was sold at Sunderland a short time ago at £.19 2s. 6d. per ton fitted, and I had the assurance of the builder, who is a respectable man, that he made no money by her. The Bremen ships are chiefly employed in the sugar trade from Cuba and the Brazils. The ship I described took coals to Havannah. The Bremen shipbuilders get their timber a good deal cheaper. A great part of the copper is obtained from this country, and also I think anchors, chains, and all manufactured iron. Cordage and sails, I should think, they have in their own country, quite sufficient to answer their purpose.

“ I do not know that any remedial measures with reference to British shipping could be adopted which would be of service. The light dues I think are decidedly too heavy upon the shipping of all countries, and that the cost of the lights might be reduced.”

William John Hall, Esq., a merchant and wharfinger in the City of London, stated :—

“ My trade is a general trade. The impression upon my mind is that the repeal of the Navigation Laws would not affect the commerce or injure the navigation of the country. It is a feeling very prevalent among shipowners that if the Navigation Laws were repealed we should not be able to compete with other countries; but, from the experience I have had with British ships, and with British seamen more particularly, whom I have watched for the last 25 years, I am inclined to think that the interests of the shipowner are more particularly involved in the advancement of the British seaman than any other party connected with shipping. The captains in the British service are very inferior, illiterate men. It is very common, particularly among the North-country captains, that they are wholly unable to read and write. I apply my observation to the captains belonging to London as well as to the outports, but more particularly to the North-country captains. I am inclined to think that the energy of the British shipowner is such, even with the impediments that now appear to stand in his way, on account of the facilities given by the reduced cost in provisioning,

and also other facilities, that they could compete successfully with the shipowners of any country. The free-trade measures augment the price of provisioning foreign ships, whilst it naturally reduces the price of provisioning British ships. It brings them to a more equal scale of provisioning. Our ships could provision as cheaply if they bought the same quality of provisions, but foreign seamen do not live so well as British seamen. I presume the provisions are as good on board the American ships as on board the English, and wages higher; for the American captains are very particular in selecting smart, active, and sturdy English seamen. I never commanded a ship, and was not bred a seaman, but a merchant. It is usual in America for the merchant and the shipowner to be the same person; here the shipowner and the merchant are generally two persons. The merchant charters a ship, or ships a certain quantity of goods on board a vessel, destined for a particular port. In the port of London vessels lay on regularly for China, or Calcutta, or Bombay, and take in general cargoes, and mercantile houses ship a part of their goods in each vessel. In America a party will make up an investment, and appoint the captain the supercargo, to take charge of the whole operation, but that is rarely done in this country. No doubt it would be a great object to the British shipowner to have superior captains. He might be induced to employ foreign captains, if of a superior description; but I do not think shipowners generally would feel the same confidence in them. I do not think that would be the general practice. In those cases where he had the power he would give the preference to foreign captains, with a view to the increase of profit, which would be a general benefit. I do not think captains employed by Messrs. Wigram and Green would be capable of undertaking such transactions as I have described. They are very superior and most respectable men, but have not had the mercantile education of American captains."

Being asked:—

“ Is it wise to disturb a law which seems to have secured an ample supply of seamen for the purposes of trade and navigation ? ”

Mr. Hall replied:—

“ I am inclined to think that by an alteration in the Navigation Laws, freights would be reduced, and vessels would be able to bring cargoes from different parts better than they do now. It would enable them to have back carriage, which in many instances they have not the means of getting now. It would reduce freights one way, but vessels would then have a return freight as well as an out-freight. My belief is, that a British

ship well manned and properly worked, can compete with any ship on the face of the world in point of expense, because the seamen are a better class of men, and have more work in them than the seamen of any country. If you take the short voyages there is greater labour; there is much more work in a coasting vessel, where she takes in a cargo in the early part of the week, makes the passage in that week, and discharges that cargo by the same crew, and takes in another cargo, going back to the port again and discharging it. The short voyage would give them more local knowledge of the particular coast; for instance, the Dutch coast, or any shallow river where the lead is constantly going."

William Briggs, Esq., a merchant of Sunderland, who has been extensively engaged in business there for about 23 years, stated:—

"The effect of the reduction of differential duties upon timber has been to bring it into more direct competition with Canadian, and has proved very injurious to the Canadian merchant; and while it has materially reduced the price of American timber, it has increased the demand for Baltic timber, as well as the price, which is shown in the subjoined tables:—

"Prices of American Timber for Two Years before and Six Years after, the Reduction of the Duty."

Quebec Timber.	1840. Duty, 10s.	1841. Duty, 10s.	1842. Duty, after 10th Oct., 1s.	1843. Duty, 1s.	1844. Duty, 1s.	1845. Duty, 1s.	1846. Duty, 1s.	1847. Duty, 1s.
	d.	d.	d.	d.	d.	d.	d.	d.
Oak, - per foot	22	22	12	10	12	16	14	14
Elm, "	9	9	4	6	7	8½	8	7
Red Pine, "	9	9½	7½	7½	7½	9	10	9
Yellow, " "	5½	5½	4	3½	4½	5	5	3½

"Taking the extreme prices of the years 1840 and 1847, there appears a deficiency, on oak, of 30 per cent.; elm, 17½ per cent.; yellow pine, 26 per cent.

Shipping Prices of Memel Timber.

Baltic Timber.	1840. Duty, 55s.	1841. Duty, 55s.	1842. Duty, re- duced on 10th Oct., 30s.	1843. Duty, re- duced on 10th Oct., 25s.	1844. Duty, 25s.	1845. Duty, 25s.	1846. Duty, re- duced on 25s.	1847. Duty, re- duced on 5th April, 20s.
Fir Timber,	s.	s.	s.	s.	s.	s.	s.	s.
Crown . . .	38	40	45	50	45	50	55	55
middling . . .	34	36	45	43	45	50	50	50
2nd middling .	24	23	30	35	32	35	45	45
Oak, Crown . . .	80	75	75	75	75	75	85	100
								Per fifty running feet.

" Taking the extreme prices of the years 1840 and 1847, crown fir had advanced 44 per cent.; middling, 41 per cent.; second middling, 87 per cent.; oak, 25 per cent.; the last sales have been effected at a sacrifice of nearly the whole prime cost.

" I wish to show by those two papers that the Government has lost a great part of the revenue which was intended to be remitted to the British public; and the Prussian and foreign merchants generally, have derived the advantage of it. I do not think the increase of price is owing to any scarcity of the article, the demand for railways must have operated in some measure to raise the price; but if an abatement of the differential duty had not taken place, a great part of the profit must have gone to the British American merchants instead of the Baltic merchants. The Baltic timber merchant having been enabled to raise his price to such an extent as I have shown he has done, when the demand shall have subsided to its natural level and the two countries have been brought into more direct competition with each other, the Baltic timber merchant will be able to reduce his prices materially, and by that means largely to engross the trade; because I presume from the failures that have taken place among the Quebec timber merchants they will not be able to reduce their prices much, and that therefore the British shipowner must lose that carrying trade.

" My importations have been chiefly from North America. I have also imported during the last three years a number of cargoes of timber from the Baltic, chiefly from Prussia, for shipbuilding purposes. Prussian ships convey goods at a lower rate of freight than British ships. I have generally employed them. I have made no particular minute of the rate of freights I paid, but the facts which I have stated will show that I had considerable advantage, or I should not have employed Prussian ships in preference to English ships, being a shipowner myself. I think that in 1845 I had all Prussian ships; in 1846 I had one English ship; in 1847 I had five English ships. The foreign ships then finding better employment in carrying grain, we were obliged to look to our own ships to bring home the timber we required. I find in all I had 29 foreign cargoes in the three years, and out of that number only six in British bottoms. I should say the advantage I had in employing Prussian vessels was fully equal to 10 per cent. on the freight; and that is a large item in those difficult times when competition is so severe. Generally speaking, the British ships employed in the timber trade are of an inferior class. The Prussian ships which are employed are not of that description. I had two or three very fine ships in the year preceding the last. One-half of them were, I should say, 1st-class ships; the others inferior. I should pay no more for carrying timber in a 1st than in a 2nd class ship. I am of opinion that timber freights would be reduced were the Navigation Laws repealed.

It would not be an advantage to the British merchant or the public to any great extent. The merchant would not be much benefited, as he calculates on a certain profit for whatever description of goods he may import. The consumer might derive a small advantage, but I should conceive it would be of no material consideration, and would not occasion any increase in the extent of imports. If I were about to build a ship I should not be deterred from building her in consequence of a slight increase in the rate of freights. Supposing a reduction of 10 per cent. to take place on the freight of the timber employed in building a ship of 200 tons, the saving would only be about £15 on the whole ship.

"The direct trade from Prussia to this country is chiefly in the hands of foreign shipowners; but, if the Navigation Laws are repealed, and they are allowed to come into more direct competition with us, as they are driving a profitable and prosperous trade now, the increased capital which would in the course of time be accumulated by navigating their ships would no doubt be quickly applied to the building of other and better ships, which would then come into competition with us in other trades where they cannot at present interfere, for instance, the British American, and the Russian trades. If the Navigation Laws were repealed I decidedly do not think the British ship-owner would be able to maintain competition with the foreigner, because he would have to pay much higher wages and the habits of living of the British sailor are so different and so much more expensive than those of the foreign seaman. We find great difficulty in getting strange men to come and settle themselves down in the port where I live. For instance, the wages are generally lower in Scotland than they are in Sunderland; and I have made many attempts to get Scotch seamen to come and settle among us. A few of them did so, but they soon required as high wages as our own men. If we tried the same thing with foreign seamen in the event of the Navigation Laws being repealed, we should experience the same result as with the Scotchmen. They would sail out of other ports where they have their wives, families, and friends at a lower rate of wages than out of Sunderland.

"I have invariably paid the freights of foreign vessels in cash. This cash was taken to my bankers, and they got orders on London bankers to be sent to their agents in London, to be remitted by them to the owners abroad. The foreign ships frequenting Sunderland have spent very little indeed in the port; it is surprising how little they spend. If by a repeal of the Navigation Laws and Registry Acts permission were given to purchase a ship built in the Baltic I would decidedly abandon the trade in Sunderland immediately; I should entertain no hope whatever of competing with the foreigners. If I pursued shipbuilding at all I should send over my sons to

Stettin, where timber and labour are cheap, build the ships I required, and bring them into this market for sale. The labourers are good hard-working men; and if I took over half a dozen English carpenters to do the finer part I should get plenty of men in Stettin to do the rougher description of work. In order to make the thing better understood, the timber would cost a very great deal less at Stettin than in England, because the timber which is brought into England is partly manufactured; I reckon that the labour in manufacturing it for the English market would be sufficient to prepare it to go into its place in the ship. A commoner description of timber could also be used for that purpose than is sent to this market, and therefore the timber would cost them little more than one-half what it costs us here, and the labour would cost them less than one-half. Supposing they had the chain cable and anchor to import from England, the mere freight would be a very small sum indeed, and the freight to England, which would be obtained at the port of building, would be a bonus to the builder. No doubt if a large number of ships were built there it would have a tendency to raise the value of labour; but the general labour of the country being less than the general labour of England, the wages would presently come down again to a lower comparative rate than we should have to pay in England. The wages in England would no doubt also come down if shipbuilding were taken away, the men being thrown out of employment and in a state of destitution.

" In the course of my transactions I have never experienced any inconvenience or injury whatever from the operation of the Navigation Laws. As to the opinion of the shipping interest in Sunderland with regard to the Navigation Laws, I should say the shipowners are almost unanimous that the repeal of the Navigation Laws would be most injurious to their interests. I believe that the carpenters, chain-makers, sail-makers, rope-makers, and anchor-smiths have all signed memorials and sent them to the House, praying that no alteration may be made; and I dare say there are full two-thirds or three-fourths of the people of Sunderland dependent on the shipping business. I do not agree in the evidence of a previous witness, who stated that he did not think the shipowners could call a public meeting where they could obtain a majority in favour of the Navigation Laws; it is a very singular assertion for any man to have made.

" With reference to the relative cost of Sunderland-built ships, the seven years' ship would be from £.8 to £.9 a ton, according to her description and dimensions; an eight years' ship from £.9 to £.9 10s. a ton; a nine years' ship at from £.10 5s. to £.12 10s. a ton; a ten years' ship at from £.12 10s. to £.14 10s. a ton; a twelve years' ship at from £.16 to £.17 a ton, equipped for sea, but exclusive of copper

sheathing, which I would rate at something like £1 a registered ton."

Robert B. Minturn, Esq., a native of New York, in the United States of America, stated :—

" I am a merchant and shipowner of New York. I own portions of a number of ships, and am an owner in the lines of packets between New York and London, and New York and Liverpool. I am interested in other ships, which trade to the East Indies and China, also as an owner of whaling ships. American tonnage has increased very much since 1832. During the war in which England was engaged with the continent of Europe, previous to 1816, a very large amount of carrying trade was thrown into the hands of Americans. Our registered tonnage at the close of the war was 800,760 tons; in 1832, it was only 686,990 tons, showing a decrease of 113,770 tons. The coasting trade in that interval of 16 years had increased from 522,165 tons up to 649,627 tons, being an addition of 127,462 tons. The coasting trade on the lakes and great rivers is classed with the inland trade. Foreign shipping is registered, the other is enrolled. That does not embrace the State canal boats, but includes the large river and lake craft. I presume it is regulated by the necessity for resorting to the Custom-houses and taking out licences. If a canal is entirely within the waters of one State, it is not at all under the control of the United States laws; whereas the commerce of the rivers and lakes is under their jurisdiction. The June Return, in 1847, shows the domestic or enrolled tonnage to be 1,488,604; the registered tonnage is 1,241,313. Vessels under 20 tons are neither registered nor enrolled. The tonnage I have given includes the whale fishery, which has fallen to about 210,000 tons, by a number of ships being withdrawn. In 1846 there were nearly 700 ships engaged in the fishery, with a tonnage of 233,189 tons. Whales being driven from their former resorts are now taken chiefly on the coast of Kamschatka, which is a very long and expensive voyage, and latterly has not generally been profitable. The law of Congress requires that two-thirds of the seamen of all American ships should be natives or naturalized citizens. Only about one-third of our seamen are natives born; the others are foreigners who have been naturalized, or who obtain American protections. As soon as a person is naturalized, which he can be by five years' residence, he enjoys all the privileges of natives in the United States; but sailors do not all wait five years. That is an evasion of the law: it is very much evaded. Whaling ships are chiefly fitted out from small seaports in New England, and their crews are

composed in a larger proportion of young men, natives of those seaports. They are in many instances the sons of persons of respectability in the eastern portions of Massachussets and Connecticut. They very soon, if they have talent and energy, become captains and officers, and frequently retire, and themselves become shipowners.

" Our New York packets are acknowledged to be the best ships built in America; they have all a portion of live oak in them, and cost, exclusively of their cabins, about 70 dollars (nearly £.14 10s.) per ton. In calculating tonnage we still pursue your old measurement. In America the poops of ships are not measured, and that accounts for a great part of the difference between British and American measurement. The *Henry Clay*, of 1207 tons American measurement, is by English measurement in Liverpool 1467 tons. The *Queen of the West*, 1106 tons American, when measured for light dues in Liverpool, was found to be 1270 tons English. Shipwrights' wages are about 10s. 6d. a day sterling. In New York they work ten hours on new work, and nine on old work. In New England they work about twelve hours in summer. We have often had ships repaired in England, and our experience is that it is more expensive than repairs in America. The law regarding emigration now requires, if a vessel upon inspection is not found to be entirely sound, she shall not be allowed to take passengers; and we instruct our captains, in case any vessel shall be found not to pass that inspection, to go home without passengers, rather than have extensive repairs made in England.

" The models of our ships have undergone a great change within the last 10 or 20 years. The object was to increase the capacity for carrying, without, if possible, diminishing the sailing qualities of the ships, and that result has been attained to a very remarkable degree. We find that by making the ships larger, the cost of building and fitting does not increase in the same ratio with the increase of size, neither does the cost of sailing. A captain and the same number of officers are required to the small as to the large ship; the difference in sailors between a ship of 600 tons and 1000 tons is not more than six or seven additional hands. The cost of one of those liners, such as I have described, exclusive of the magnificent cabin, is about £.14 a ton, which includes a ship provided for the reception of cargo and stores, and ready for sea. The charts, chronometers, and nautical instruments are furnished by the captains. They would have one entire suit of sails, and such spare sails as experience shows to be necessary. The ship would be copper-fastened. All is complete at New York for £.14 a ton for the very best description of vessel you can turn out, and of the same kind as the *Devonshire*. The tanks are usually made of wood. The iron used in shipbuilding is

chiefly procured from England. We are working iron mines, but we still import a very large quantity. There is an ample supply of iron ore in America, but it will require a long time to develop it sufficiently to supply the whole consumption of the country. We import copper from Peru; and there are two smelting-houses, one in Boston and one in Baltimore. We import canvas from Russia and England; but we also manufacture a large quantity of cotton canvas, and within the last two years have commenced manufacturing hempen canvas; we are also growing American hemp, and beginning to use it for rigging. We look forward in time to be enabled to equip our own ships complete, without going to England or to Russia. We have a duty on the import of rope and canvas. Our recent tariff, which has been in operation for two years, is considered a revenue tariff, not a protection tariff."

Mr. Minturn was then requested to look at a list given in by Mr. Hankey*, and to mark how many of the articles therein named would be included in his estimate of £.14 a ton, and, having done so, stated:—

"Chronometers and pilotage would not be included. Joiners' work would be included. In equipping the ships great attention is paid to facilitating labour by captans, winches, and other contrivances, and the ships are much more lightly sparred than formerly. A ship of 1000 tons now would not be more heavily sparred than one of 800 tons formerly. They are efficiently manned with a view to making as short a passage as possible, and average about $2\frac{1}{2}$ sailors to 100 tons. They are from 900 to 1200 tons. In common freighting ships, where despatch is less considered, they have a smaller number in proportion to the tonnage. The *Henry Clay*, which is 1207 tons American, and 1467 English, has 30 sailors, two boys, and a carpenter; she has besides a captain, four mates, with cook, and steward. There is another ship, the *New World*, of 1400 tons, which measures about the same in American as in English tonnage, and she has the same number of men as the *Henry Clay*. I came over to England in a ship of 900 tons, the crew of which consisted of 18 sailors, two boys, four mates, and a carpenter. The ships referred to carry the heaviest description of cargoes; no ships of any nation carry heavier cargoes; and as evidence that they did not suffer more than others, it may be stated that they commanded through this year quite as high freights as any others, and none were issued at lower rates. We have lately paid for building our 1st-class ships about £.9 a ton. The only item in shipbuilding which to my knowledge is cheaper in America is wood; and this, for ships built in

* See p. 201, *post*.

New York, has to bear heavy transportation, much of the timber being brought by sea from Virginia and Florida, and the plank from Lake Erie, a distance of 500 miles. The iron is imported from England, and pays a duty of 30s. Copper is also much higher than in England, and wages are nearly double.

" I think that an A 2 American ship would insure more readily than a ship of the same age built in British North America. New vessels of British North America, well built, coppered, &c., would class A 2 on the books of our under-writers; A 3 is a low grade, usually applied to vessels of advanced age and bad repute, and such are only insured at advanced premiums. The new ships built in New York are all classed A 1; of those that come to New York from the States of Maine, few rank A 1, most of them A 2; there is rarely any other classification than A 1 1 $\frac{1}{2}$, A 2 2 $\frac{1}{2}$, and A 3. The cost of an A 2 ship, equipped as I have before described, ready to receive her cargo, would be about £11 10s. or £12; they are generally built of a variety of timber that grows in Maine, and which is not so durable as that of which the ships built in New York or the vicinity of Boston are constructed.

" In foreign freighting voyages the captains depend chiefly on the primeage, which is five per cent. upon the amount of freight; they generally receive that together with 30 dollars a month wages. In 1st-class ships the pay of the chief mate is 40 dollars; 2nd ditto 25; 3rd ditto 20; 4th ditto 18; sailors 15 dollars a month; and boys 5 dollars.

" National feeling does not influence American merchants in the least; I think that dry goods are generally ordered for shipment by the American packet ships; but I am sure their action is not at all influenced by national feeling. A large proportion of the manufactured goods sent to America on British account goes in American packet ships. So far as my experience extends, merchants shipping cargoes look only to the safety, economy, and despatch with which those cargoes can be conveyed from one port to another, without regarding in the least the nationality of the vessel. Merchants who import merchandise of British manufacture are not interested in the ships. Of the manufactured goods exported to America, both on British and American account, *I think it possible that nine-tenths may go in American ships.*

" I attribute the increase in American tonnage to the employment caused by the opening of great internal communications, to the effect of increase of manufactures, opening of coal mines, &c. European immigration has also become a support of commerce with America. The reciprocity treaties which the United States concluded with foreign countries were entered into shortly previous to 1830. The United States then proposed to all foreign nations that if they would open their ports

to American shipping, ships of such nations might enjoy all the benefits of our foreign trade, bringing the productions of foreign nations to our ports. The shipowners in America were very distrustful of the operation of it, finding that it was chiefly embraced by the States of the North of Europe, who had no commerce to offer us in return; and some efforts were made to induce the Government to rescind those treaties, but our commerce has increased in a much greater ratio since that period than it had done before; not that I suppose the reciprocity treaties to have promoted the increase of American tonnage, but it appears they have not retarded its growth. The opposition has ceased. I do not think the shipowners benefited, except by the encouragement given to the whale fishery by German and Swedish vessels coming to America for whale oil, of which they take off very large quantities. The effect upon agriculture, from the large quantity of tobacco and cotton which these ships take to Germany, is certainly very favourable. The general business of shipowners has immensely increased; from 1832 to 1847 our tonnage has doubled. I do not think we have been indebted to the reciprocity treaties for that; commerce with all the world has increased, and probably nowhere so much as with England. The chief extension of our commerce with South America has been to the Brazils. The duty was taken off coffee, and our consumption has doubled within ten years; we consume 150 millions against 75 millions of pounds ten years ago, and a large tonnage is employed in that trade.

" We have generally adopted the temperance plan on board our vessels, and find the greatest possible advantage both in the efficiency and the discipline of the crews. The underwriters attached so much importance to it that at the commencement of the reform they encouraged it by offering to return 10 per cent. of the premium on all vessels that performed a voyage without the use of ardent spirits. It also led to a saving of labour and a diminution of the number of men employed. We take very few boys, rarely more than two, in vessels employed in the European trade. In our ships in the China trade we have very few able-bodied seamen, but a much larger proportion of ordinary seamen and boys; the total number of men is about the same as in the European trade, but a much larger proportion of ordinary seamen and boys. The wages given in the China trade are lower than in the European trade. In the East Indies the winds are light, and it is found they can manage the ships with a larger proportion of boys and ordinary seamen. Our trade with China is increasing. Our liberty to manage our matters in our own way has led us to man our ships chiefly with foreigners. Americans can generally find more profitable employment on shore. The American whaling trade is supplied chiefly with American seamen. For all the rest of our commerce we take seamen without any

regard to national character. About two-thirds of our seamen are of foreign birth—Englishmen, Swedes, Danes, and Germans. In several ports there are sailors' homes, or temperance boarding-houses, in which men are better provided for than formerly. They have had a very great effect in elevating the character of other boarding-houses for sailors.

“ If the British Navigation Laws were repealed I believe, from what I know of the state of opinion in America, that our Government would be disposed to go as far in removing restrictions. I should entertain no doubt of it. They would unquestionably consider the probability of loss or gain by it, but the tendency of opinion in America is now in favour of the removal of restrictions on commerce. When I left America this subject had not been discussed at all. There has been such ample employment for American tonnage that public attention has not been directed to looking out for new sources, and there has been no anxiety felt by shipowners to open new channels of employment. The American merchant and shipowner are generally united in one person. The merchant manages his own ships. In the China trade the owner of the ship is the owner of the cargo, but in most branches of trade the ships are owned by a class of persons who employ them in taking freight for other merchants. The manufactured goods that go from Europe to America do not belong to the owner of the ship.”

Money Wigram, Esq., an extensive shipowner and ship-builder, in London, stated:—

“ The ships in which I am concerned are chiefly engaged in the East India and China trades. I have been concerned in the South Sea fishery. I am owner of about 11 or 12 ships, from 400 to 1200 tons. The cost of a ship depends very much upon time and circumstance, and therefore will vary from about £22 10s. to £25; we may take a mean of £24; equipped and ready for sea as a 1st-class 12 A 1 ship, sheathed with yellow metal. A system has lately been introduced under which, if all the bolts which appear on the outside are copper, the ships are classed for 13 years, and if fastened with yellow metal or copper bolts only, they are classed as 14 years ships. Exclusive of primage, which varies from 2½ to 5 or 6 per cent., according to the employment the ship may be in, the captain is allowed monthly wages. I have taken the expenses of a ship exclusive of repairs, pilotage, primage, or light dues; as the difference between the charges at different ports makes it difficult to give anything like an average. The certain expenses of a ship of 691 tons old measurement, 938 tons new measurement, for 12 months, would amount to about £5452. I have taken the cost of the *Minerva*, a ship of that tonnage,

at £.24 a ton, making £.16,584. The interest at 5 per cent. would be £.829; depreciation at 10 per cent. £.1658; premium of insurance and policy duty £.1029; victualling at 1s. a day—for the number of men (39) usual in an English ship of that size—£.712; wages £.1224; and the ship would deliver 1000 tons of cargo, on which quantity £.5 9s. a ton would cover the expenses for one year.

“ To illustrate the difference of expense between the British ship and a ship belonging to the United States of America, I will take one of the New York packets—the *Victoria*, of 870 tons old measurement, new measurement 1044. I have the particulars of that ship from the commander, who is a part-owner. She cost 65,000 dollars, equal to £.15 10s. a ton, coppered and complete in all respects for sea. The New York packet-ships are not classed in Lloyd’s book*, but I understand that the *Victoria* would only class as a 7 A 1. ship, and that the additional outlay which would be required to make her equal to a 12 A 1 ship would be between £.3 and £.4 per register ton. The interest upon her first cost at 6 per cent. (which American owners require) would be £.812; depreciation at 10 per cent. £.1354; insurance, &c., £.840; victualling 20 men (the number actually carried) £.274; wages (allowing 10s. per man per month additional) £.1032; total expenses for 12 months £.4312; exclusive of prime, pilotage, &c. This ship delivered a cargo of 457½ tons of measurement goods and 826½ tons of weight goods—in all 1284 tons; and the expense per ton per annum upon that quantity would be £.3 7s. 2d., showing a difference in favour of the American ship of £.2 1s. 10d. per ton†. It would require 8½ years to return the capital invested in the *Minerva*, and about 5 years to return the capital invested in the American ship. In ascertaining the time requisite to do this, I had the expenses deducted from the earnings, and divided the result by the number of years, and had them both made equal to 12 A 1 ships by adding £.4 a ton to the cost of the *Victoria*.

“ The largest cargo my ship has delivered is 900 tons; the American ship has delivered 1284 tons. I took the cargo of my ship at 1000 tons, because if she had not come away upon the approach of a hurricane she would most probably have brought that cargo. The English ship brought sugar; the American a mixed cargo of grain and other goods. There were 457½ tons measurement goods and 826½ tons consisting of peas, pork, lard, beef, flour, corn, tobacco, and meal. My ship is built of oak frame and Indian teak planking. I cannot

* See p. 181, wherein a reason is given for this fact.

† The above figures differ in some respects from Mr. Wigram’s; but I think upon a scrutiny it will be found that mine are correct. I have also included in the above his amended version of the calculation.

answer as to all the details of the American ship, but I believe the frame is of live oak, and the beams and some of the planks fir. Live oak is held in very high estimation indeed. We do all our work by task; but I am informed our men do not do the same amount of work as the Americans. The men earn from 7s. to 8s. a day; in America they earn more.

" I was yesterday [May 25] in communication with a very intelligent American who has come from New York to this country in command of a new ship, which I went to see. She is as fine a specimen of a ship as I have seen, so far as I could judge when loaded with a full cargo; her name is the *Devonshire**; she is 186 feet length over all, 40 feet breadth, 21 feet depth to the upper deck; but upon the upper deck there is a large poop and a set of houses in midships for additional passengers, and a forecastle, so that the ship has very nearly an additional deck. She measures 1150 tons, old measurement. This individual told me that he could not state accurately what the cost of the ship would be, but it was between 85,000 and 90,000 dollars. Taking 87,500 dollars as the mean, at 4s. 2d. per dollar, it would give £18,230. Her cabin is most elaborately fitted up, for which I should make a deduction of £1500, that being the sum mentioned to me, which would bring her to £14 10s. per ton, or £15 5s. coppered. She is navigated by a crew of 24 able seamen, principally English, and four officers; and the commander declares that he is ashamed of the number as excessive. I must explain that although American ships have this small number of men they have a great many mechanical means to assist in working a ship. There is such superiority in American ships in some of these respects that I have men at work making patterns of their mechanical contrivances. Then they use very strong measures to enforce obedience; they have no hesitation in striking a man with a handspike or anything else, and it is borne out by the law. Englishmen prefer the American service for a time, but they come back again. I do not know that they are better fed than they are on board our ships. The American plan is to allow them whatever they can eat, but we give them rations. I frequently find that our men sell part of their rations to the ship. We allow them whatever bread and water they require, provided there is no waste. But the American has this advantage over us; our beef is principally imported from America, and consequently it has to undergo the voyage to England, while theirs is put on board the ship there. Their bread is a much nearer approach to our navy bread than anything I have seen, but it is not so good.

" We have no difficulty in procuring trustworthy men as

* Mr. Wigram gave his evidence (see p. 156, *ante*,) in May, and Mr. Minturn in June; the agreement between his statement and that of the American Gentleman is important.

captains ; they are principally young men whom we have brought up ; they commence as apprentices or as midshipmen ; they get their practical education when they become mates, but those boys who have sufficient good sense to exert themselves may learn their profession previously. On the first two voyages they can do nothing, but afterwards they are deputed to see that certain work is carried into effect under another officer, and are on deck with the officer of the watch, and taught to take observations, &c.

" The accounts I have received lead me to believe that temperance ships are so only at sea, but when they get into port in this country or abroad the sailors become drunken and indulge in the worst habits. It is no improvement of the men, but only the enforcement of good discipline. It has always been an enigma to me how our ships make their voyages. In every ship the sailors have at least six copies of the Merchant Seamen's Act on board. When the men feel themselves aggrieved they complain to the captain and refer to a particular section of the Act, under which he will find the justice of their complaint. If the captain is not provided with the Act, or cannot find it, they beg to tender a copy for his service. In a foreign port the Consul has power to hear a complaint, but cannot enforce any punishment ; and the master has no power of punishing the men beyond that of stopping their wages, to which they are perfectly callous. Our men very seldom leave us ; they come home, receive their wages, and frequently remain at home till we have another ship going out, and then they come and offer their services.

" The amount of duties payable upon articles used in ship-building is trifling ; it is about 3s. 6d. a ton on a Thames-built merchant ship of 691 tons ; but the whole should be repealed if the Navigation Laws are altered. An alteration in the Navigation Laws would not occasion a reduction in the cost of materials, speaking of a river-built ship. So long as the Government requires timber and other materials, it appears to me that the prices cannot fall, being regulated by the Government demand. If there comes an increased demand from the dockyards, there is an immediate increase in the price of timber of all dimensions. Those of whom we buy the timber are merchants in the country, who fell the timber and sell to us. The quantity of African timber imported regulates itself. It may have some influence on the price of oak timber, but that and teak are not applicable for the general purposes for which we use English timber. We only use Baltic timber as deals for the decks. If Baltic oak is used in the construction of ships, it lowers their class in Lloyd's Register-book. It is inferior as compared with English oak. I consider an English-built ship more durable than a Prussian, or other foreign-built ship ; but the reduced cost of the foreign-built ship enables the owner to sail cheaper

and to return a better profit than an English-built ship. Adriatic timber is more expensive of the sizes we require than English oak, and is not equally good. Large timber is becoming more scarce every year. I prefer English oak to any other timber in the world. Hakmatak is very good: it is not applicable to the frame of a ship, but only to the planks and beams.

" I have built for Spain a man-of-war steamer and a sailing frigate. The only ships that I know of that have been built in England for foreign countries have been for war purposes. The reason we were employed to build those vessels was that Spain had not the power of constructing them. Celebrated as that country formerly was for building ships they have now entirely lost that power or knowledge.

" The whale fishery of this country is now very nearly lost. In 1826 there were 78 British ships employed in the sperm whale fishery. From 25 to 30 were fitted out annually. The duty was then £26 10s. per ton. In 1842 an Act passed to reduce the duty, and the number of ships fell to 59, and 11 only were fitted out. In 1846 another Act passed to repeal the duty which was to come into effect in 1849, and in 1846 only three ships were fitted out, and there remained but 43 ships in the fishery. They are now reduced to 20. There was one ship fitted out last year, but I believe there are none now, and I do not think there will be. I attribute the decrease to the circumstance of the Americans being able, from the cheapness of their ships, to undersell the English. American and English ships carry equal cargoes, and catch an equal quantity in the same time in proportion to their tonnage. The sperm whale fishery is protected in America by a high duty upon vegetable oil, which keeps the prices of the black, or common train oil, nearly equal; but in this country, there being little or no duty upon vegetable oil, the black oil is very variable in price. The Americans, from the certainty of obtaining about an equal price for black oil, fish for black and sperm oil at the same time. A similar effect is visible in the Northern fishery; in 1815 there were about 64 British ships engaged in it, which are now reduced to 15. The British colonists in Australia have an advantage, but still they are not carrying on the fishery beneficially. In some ships the master has as much as a 12th; the mate varying from a 30th to an 85th of the value of the cargo after certain deductions are made; and the sailors have about the 155th. The pay of the coopers and men of that kind varies in proportion to their usefulness.

" The admission of foreign-built ships to the privileges at present reserved to British-built ships would, I think, considerably decrease the number of ships built in England. I found that opinion upon the fact of America and many of the European States being able to build ships very much cheaper; I believe my trade in shipbuilding would very largely diminish, and that

I should have principally to look to my shipowning trade. I foresee, in the event of the repeal of the Navigation Laws, a probability of its being to my interest to go out to New York, and make arrangements for building ships there. I have ascertained lately that it is not a thing to be done satisfactorily by agents, and therefore the probability is that I should myself go out and make the arrangement. I quite anticipate the probability, if such an alteration should be made, of finding it my interest to induce one of my sons to take up his residence in America, and carry on the trade jointly with his brother. I do not think I should get ships ready built to answer my own views. I should of course prefer continuing the building of ships on my own premises; but if my present expectations were realized, and I found that I could build ships cheaper in America, I should resort to American ships. Government has availed itself of the strength of private dockyards whenever the necessity arose, and they have always obtained an ample supply of shipwrights from thence. Anything that would tend to reduce those private establishments would materially weaken the maritime force of this country, by depriving the Government of the power of providing the royal dockyards of the country with artisans in time of need*. It is not at present more profitable to be owner of a cheap foreign than of a dear English ship; but I believe it would be if foreign ships were admitted to the privileges of British register; in that case I should prefer a cheap foreign ship. New Brunswick ships do not last any time and will not carry heavy cargoes, and the Colonists have not materials to build better ships. American shipowners look upon our proposed alteration of the Navigation Laws as the most beneficial arrangement possible for the United States, and most disadvantageous for this country. *Extracts of some letters have been communicated to me carrying the opinion to the extent of considering the American congress to be sitting in this country for the benefit of the United States.* So far as the purpose at present intended is declared by Mr. Labouchere in the House of Commons, it is a half-measure only, which if carried will be the most detrimental thing possible. If free trade is to prevail it should be entirely free. One instance of restriction which I would take the liberty of mentioning is the coasting trade. That trade is to be restricted to British ships entirely, and consequently if this measure were to be carried, no foreign nation would admit our ships to the coasting trade of their country. Another restriction is that of requiring the ships to be manned with three-fourths British sailors, which would debar shipowners from employing foreigners at reduced wages. It would be impossible to man ships with part Englishmen and part foreigners at different wages and different manners of feeding, and it would soon fall into the better class of feeding

* See Evidence of Sir T. Byam Martin, *post.*

being given to all. The coasting trade of America is open I believe to the Swedes and Danes. If any repeal of the Navigation Laws is to take place, it appears to me that it should be entire, and that British shipowners should be allowed to employ foreigners of any denomination in their ships, and that the coasting trade should also be included. I am now speaking as a shipowner, looking to my own interest, and having no thought of the maritime defence of the country. The probability is, that the repeal would destroy the shipbuilding business of the country, and that shipowning would be carried on by the purchase of foreign ships. It would also lead to a great decrease in the number of British-born seamen, as the supply now derived from apprentices would be stopped. Americans can do better on land than by going to sea, and those only who have the prospect of becoming captains, continue to follow it up. Greater power should be given to British consuls resident abroad, as they cannot now adjudicate, which occasions a great practical grievance. If a seaman now refuses to perform his duty, or is absent without leave, he is subject to a forfeit of two days' wages, but if absent 24 hours, or perseveres in refusing to work, he is liable to be fined six days' wages for each day he may be absent or refuses to do his duty; and the consul and certain officers have power to arrest the man and to put him on board his ship."

William Tindall, Esq., a shipbuilder and shipowner at Scarborough, and also in London, of the firm of William, James, and Robert Tindall, of Scarborough, stated:—

"I have been engaged in the shipping business all my life, and my family for 150 years. In the course of my experience as a shipowner I have been conversant with almost every trade, including the coal trade, Baltic, Mediterranean, North America, India, China, South Australia, and Western America.

"The expense of building at Scarborough an 8 A 1 ship would be £.8 a ton, and four guineas for the shipbuilding outfit. She would be built with English oak and of good material; nine years would be £.9; ten years about £.9 10s., and £.4 15s. for the outfit; a 12 years' ship £.12 10s., and £.5 a ton for the outfit. That is our own rate of building; and I do not think anybody can build a ship for less money, to do it well. Copper sheathing would cost 22s. a ton to 26s., according to the weight of the copper, whether 18 or 28 ounces. The outfit for the voyage would depend entirely upon its length; if it were for the Baltic it would not cost more than 10s. a ton; but it would amount to £.5 a ton for a ship going to India or China. There would be in addition a passengers' outfit, if they were taking passengers, which would increase the

expense very much. The outfit for the voyage includes the provisioning for the crew ; all that has to be paid for before she can go to sea ; it is in fact everything that is likely to be used on a voyage—extra rope, extra canvas, and other things that may be wanted before the ship's return. The shipbuilding outfit includes masts, yards, sails, ropes, anchors, chains, ship chandlery, and a variety of cooking-utensils, colours, spy glasses, &c. &c. The pay of the captain of a ship of 500 tons going to India is £10 a month, 2 per cent. upon the freight made, and 10 per cent. on all his passage-money. The captain gets a little from the post-office—2d. for every letter, which will sometimes amount to £10, £15, or £20, but we do not interfere with that. The yearly income is from £300 to £400 a year ; and he is provided with a moderate quantity of wine, live stock, and everything necessary for his table. The chief officer has about £6 6s. per month, and his keep ; the carpenter £5 or £5 5s. ; the 2nd mate about £4 ; the 3rd mate £3 ; and a seaman about £2 5s., out of which he pays his muster-roll ; the cook about £3 10s., and some perquisites. We generally have boatswains in the shape of 2nd or 3rd mate ; we sometimes ship them as boatswains ; but it entirely depends upon whether they are merely rough sailors, or stepping forward from apprentices upwards ; we let them go one year before the mast, and then they become 3rd mate, afterwards 2nd mate, chief mate, and captain. The captain of a 10-year ship of about 200 tons would have about £9 a month, and nothing else, except a little 'cap-larking'—a Prussian term meaning a small sum given to the captain for taking care of the cargo ;—the chief mate £4 15s. ; 2nd mate £3 10s. ; carpenter £4 10s., sometimes £5. Seamen in the Northern voyages trading from London have 50s. a month, but from the Northern ports £3 and £3 5s. A vessel of this kind would have about 10 in crew, including two or three boys, each of whom would cost 15s. a month. The provisioning costs about 1s. 3d. a day all round. There would be an allowance in addition made to the captain for his table—about 25s. or 30s. a month. They go very near the wind in this North-country trade, very. We do not send our ships without spirits ; we endeavour to keep the crew as sober as we can."

With reference to the difference between the cost of Prussian and English shipping which Mr. Tindall was required of his own knowledge to furnish, he stated :—

" I have an account here :—' To build a ship of 500 tons, which will carry 700 tons weight, and measure 356 Prussian lasts, will require of materials for the hull, 300 loads of rough timber, or in sided timber 200 loads ; for planking, 100 loads ; fir timber for decks and fittings, 41 loads ; for masts and yards,

38 loads; in all 379 loads, equal to 557 tons.' If this timber had to be imported into this country from Prussia, it would cost for freight £.400, and for other charges £.100. The duty on oak timber is 20s. a load; on fir timber 15s. The merchant's profit on the importation I calculate at £.100. An Englishman would therefore have to pay above a foreigner, 'Difference in timber, £.959 5s.; on tar, £.25; hemp, £.150; on sail cloth, £.50; wages of all descriptions, £.1050; which on a ship of 500 tons altogether is £.2249 5s., or £.4 10s. per ton.' The Swedes have better iron, and can make anchors and chains as well as we can; but if they want them from this country they have them at a very small charge. Sometimes they come from home very slightly chained and anchored, and complete when they come here, therefore I make no difference in iron-work. With regard to crew, their men are as good as ours; we carry about the same number as they do. The difference of feeding is considerable. The Prussian allowance is 1 lb. of beef, or $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. of pork, 1 lb. of bread, 3 pints of beer a day, 1 lb. of butter a week, 22 lbs. of peas and 11 lbs. of groats a month.

"It is of the highest importance that a shipowner should have the very best description of shipping; the best is neither too good nor too strong to encounter the inclemencies of weather they often meet with. But this is not so much appreciated either by merchants or underwriters; and it arises very much from underwriters insuring large sums of money on produce without naming the ships, leaving that to be declared as they, the merchants, have advices of the shipment of the goods; and the merchants leaving to their foreign correspondent the selection of the ships. If there were two ships at Bombay it might make a shade of difference if one was not A 1 and the other was; but it would not make 5s. per ton difference on a freight of £.5. Underwriters insure perhaps £.15,000 upon cotton, the ships to be declared thereafter; sometimes they confine the merchants to one class of ships, and sometimes more than one, such as A 1 or Δ 1; in this case they make a difference. I become the underwriter on my own ships very often to a large extent. I have known ships built in Sweden altogether of fir, which have come over here and loaded cargoes of the best goods from this country to Canton, at the very highest rate of freight; and not for one year only, but for three or five years. The insurance was six guineas per cent. out and home, which was very low; she was insured at Lloyd's.

"The effect of the repeal of the Navigation Laws would be to let foreign ships share at least one-half of the carrying trade that we have for the home consumption market; they would come into the trades immediately, but would not put us out immediately; but eventually, cheapness of build and cheapness of wages and provisioning, which is more important than

cheapness of build, because it is continually acting from first to last, are such considerations as to afford us great cause for alarm. British ships have, it is true, permission to import cargoes from all parts of the world into Prussia; but it is of no avail, as they have no eligible ports. Pilau has only 11 feet of water over the bar; Memel bar prevents all ships from entering with cargoes; and at Dantzic they have only six feet over the bar, and have therefore made an artificial entrance by which they are enabled to take small vessels up, drawing 11 or 12 feet of water. Prussia has threatened to withdraw the law, if we do not repeal our Navigation Laws; but the threat is quite ridiculous. It would not be of the least importance whether that law existed or not. If Prussia were to get possession of Hamburg, and also obtain possession of the ports in the North Sea, it would be a different thing; and if they could get possession of the Elbe, they would have the inlet into Germany. The Germans would think very little of Hamburg, and it is possible for them to make another dépôt a little lower down.

"I have to remark on the clause which applies to the produce of Asia, Africa, and America, that if you were to allow importation from the ports of Europe, you would raise up an opposition in Holland more serious than anything you have ever anticipated. If a merchant at Rotterdam had a quantity of sugar or coffee, or anything of the kind, to dispose of, it would be very easy for him to send round the east coast of England, and sell to the grocers any quantity of those goods, which he could forward as quickly as they could be sent from London, and with greater ease, because there is a great quantity of coal carried to Holland, and it would be an acknowledgment more than a freight, the goods would be brought here for almost nothing. Supposing a Dutchman were to sell these goods to an English grocer for a trifle less than the grocer got them for from London, the Dutchman's warehouse would be emptied, and an order sent to India for another lot, and the London merchant being disappointed, must stand still and wait another customer, and so the two markets would be chafing one against the other. I do not know how far it would extend, but it might extend to Ireland if there was an open competition between London and Rotterdam. In Rotterdam the merchants have their warehouses at the door of their own places; they have no public docks, but capital private stores, and can take any quantity of goods to themselves and distribute them in any way they like without any trouble. The Rotterdam merchant on equal terms would gain half the trade or more, without any doubt. The Dutch sail their ships cheaper than the English. They pay to seamen 33s. a month, and we 40s. or 45s. They buy their timber a good deal cheaper, and their wages are lower; there is a difference of about one-third.

“ With respect to the reciprocity duties, see what an effect they have had! Prussia, Sweden, and Norway—you have had Returns of our traffic with those countries, and they show a continual lessening of the quantity of English tonnage, and an increase of foreign, and it will go on with all these other trades if you do the same thing with them; we are at present saved by the restrictions of the Navigation Laws and the colonial system.

“ As regards the Reciprocity Treaty with Russia, we have only had it for three or four years; and you will recollect that she never would have had a ship at all, but she conquered Russian Finland to the head of the Gulf of Bothnia. No man in Russia can be let go out of the country unless a bond is given that he shall be returned; consequently they cannot have sailors to any great amount in Russia, but in Finland they can. If you turn to the ships that come from Russia you will find that they almost entirely belong to Russian Finland. The shipping with Russia has gone on increasing. The Archangel and Russian Finland ships have increased rapidly of late. The trade of Russia altogether has increased, and consequently the British trade has increased with that country. We have no Reciprocity Treaty with France*. There are a few ships trading between this country and Bordeaux which bring a little brandy home and take out coal. Our Reciprocity Treaty with Holland is not of long duration. That trade, with the exception of coal ships, is mostly carried on by the steamers, and they are all British except one, the *Batavier*.”

John Palmer Younghusband, Esq., of the firm of Jones and Younghusband, Liverpool, a shipowner and insurance broker, stated:—

“ I have been a resident at Liverpool since I was a boy, constantly engaged in the shipping trade. I think the effect which the repeal of the Navigation Laws would have on the mercantile marine of this country would be very prejudicial to the shipowner and all connected with him. As a shipowner I cannot contend with the foreigner, who has a cheaper ship, manned with men receiving lower wages and living on inferior diet. I am quite satisfied that the foreign shipowner does sail his ship much more cheaply than the English can. I refer to all foreigners connected with the trade of the country generally. All foreigners can sail their ships more cheaply than Englishmen. The permission to take foreigners as one-fourth of the crew is of no practical use to the British shipowner. The foreign seaman differs from the British in his habits of life and mode of diet: they never amalgamate well as a crew. When

* See p. 51, *ante*.

we take foreigners they receive the same wages as the British sailors. Some have been in the service a long time. We could never have two rates of wages for seamen on board a ship.

"A while ago I was in Hamburg, and had an opportunity of examining the line of packets established between that port and New York. Those vessels were built in Lubec, and the owner of them laid open to me their cost of building in its minute particulars. They were remarkably fine ships, about 400 or 500 tons, built of oak; their cost, fitted to sea, without provisions or advance of wages, was about £11 a ton, a little under. They carried passengers more than goods, I believe necessarily on account of the trade. They were calculated for heavy cargoes to a certain extent. I suppose that all the through bolts below the copper sheathing of the ship were necessarily of copper; £11 a ton included all expenses except provisions. I saw the account of the prices in the shipowner's books. The last ship which I built, the *Menzies*, cost £21 7s. per ton, without any provisions or advance of wages. The *Menzies* was built at Whitehaven, by a man who had been Messrs. Brocklebank's foreman for 25 years, and who is now leader of an independent company. The class of A 1 at Lloyd's is not necessarily a criterion of the real value of the ship. I have known two vessels both classed for the same number of years in Lloyd's book, and I would give £4 or £5 a ton more for the one than for the other. I have hitherto acted strictly upon the principle of building the best ships that money could build, in the hope that the laws of this country affecting them would not be altered. They have been A 1 12 and 13. I certainly do not mean to build any more A 1 12 with the present prospect; but supposing the Navigation Laws to remain untouched, I would continue to build as I have done. The best ship is the most profitable in the long run. We are at a disadvantage for some years with them. We have to contend with more moderate-priced vessels, which for a while keep down our profits; but we reap the benefit ultimately by the superior durability of our ships. It is cheaper in the long run with the Navigation Laws; but it would not be so without them, because the foreigner can work so much more cheaply that I should starve for the first few years. My own experience of shipping as an investment, previously to the year 1846, was this: the money invested gave me an interest of 4 per cent. per annum, after allowing for the annual depreciation in the value of the property. I should say that six or seven tenths of the whole cost of a ship is involved in British labour, between the actual raw material and the ship when she is ready for sea. The carpenters' and joiners' labour varies according to the quality of the ship. There would be some risk of this labour being lost to the country in the event of the repeal. Our ship-

ping, in my opinion, would decrease, and the labour would be thrown into the hands of foreigners. I should always object to purchase a foreign-built ship, or to build one abroad, on account of the practical difficulties of overlooking the work; but I might, to a certain extent, overlook the building of a ship at a distance by casual visits. When I was at Hamburg I had a vessel of my own there, and had occasion to ship a carpenter; he had previously had 40s. a month, but I had to pay him £4. He knew that I could not get a carpenter otherwise, and made me pay what was customary in the English service. There would be some serious practical difficulties in employing a foreign crew, unless from the master down to the boy. I should object to this very strongly, as an Englishman. If the Navigation Laws were repealed so as to open the whole trade of the world to compete with England, but yet prevented an English shipowner from sailing with other than English seamen, it would place him at a serious disadvantage. He would lose the protection now afforded by the law on the one hand, and be compelled to take the most expensive seamen on the other.

"It has been stated that English vessels successfully compete with foreigners between Trieste and the Brazils, and would be able to do so if there were no Navigation Laws; but they now make up by coming to England for the comparatively low profit of the other part of the voyage. The freight to England continues the ship in a round of constant pay, and she is therefore in a better position. In the event of a repeal she would be very differently circumstanced, because any foreign ship could do the same thing; whereas the ships that can now do it are very limited. My ships are temperance ships. Ardent spirits are absolutely prohibited on board for the use of the crew. The captain is allowed to take a little wine, or even a little spirit with him. He is generally recommended not to do so. Temperance ships are, I believe, better managed, and quite as popular among the seamen. I do not believe that the masters of foreign vessels are, generally speaking, better educated and more skilled navigators than the masters of British ships. We have inferior men from many causes; but the best ships and the best masters in the world are to be found in the British service.

"I do not think the British shipowner pays a higher rate of premium upon insurance than he ought to do. My experience as an underwriter and insurance-broker has been precisely the reverse of that. The premiums for some years past have not paid the losses, and the failure of several public insurance companies in this country proves the fact in a public manner. Insurance companies on the Continent, in some few cases, take risks at a lower rate than English underwriters; but they are chiefly risks they are not practically acquainted with, such, for instance, as the carrying coals to India, which has become a very dangerous risk from spontaneous combustion. This risk can be

done on the Continent on very moderate terms. I believe the risks taken at a cheaper rate on the Continent are few in number, and that the fact will be a temporary one. The character of the captain is not taken into consideration by underwriters. It is presumed that a first-rate shipowner will only employ in his service first-rate men.

" I have never felt the apprenticeship regulation a burden. I think it has increased the number and improved the quality of the apprentices. Our ships carry almost double the number of apprentices they are forced to take. Some of the best officers and masters I have, and have had, were brought up in my own service and that of my father. I believe it would not be possible to man either the mercantile or the royal navy without youths being introduced from a very tender age. The abolition of the apprenticeship system is put forward as a boon to the shipowner, and to some shipowners it would be a boon. Owners of large ships that go short or unhealthy voyages, have a difficulty in getting apprentices, and particularly respectable ones. Those ships are often in port at home, and sometimes are delayed considerably; and to such it is a burden, but in the higher class of ships the shipowners have no such objection against them. When in the employment of Messrs. Brocklebank, in whose office I was educated, I had charge of the apprentices for several years; they amounted to 150 or 200. With hardly any exception all the officers and captains Messrs. Brocklebank have, have been brought up in their service, and a finer set of men never trod the deck of a ship. The same system still would be carried on by those who liked it; but it is absurd to hold out the abolition of it as a boon. It would diminish the number of seamen, because the shipowners of whom I speak as objecting to take apprentices would, of course, avail themselves of the option. It seems to be almost a matter of course now, that a British crew runs away in North America as soon as the ship arrives there. It does not follow that those men enter the United States' service; they go to be employed in other British ships which are coming home, and to get higher wages homewards. I have known £.20 paid from Quebec. A man engaging to make a voyage out and home, say from Liverpool to Quebec and back, at £.4 a month, finds, when he arrives at Quebec, that by running away he can make the voyage back at £.12 or £.14 a month.

" Our ships have on several occasions brought copper ore from Chili. The freights obtained in this country by charter have been from £.4 5s., or perhaps as low as £.4, up to £.6, and this highest rate I obtained at the time when the import of copper ore into this country was open to the competition of all nations. The trades which would be the most interfered with by the repeal of the Navigation Laws are those involving the carrying of light goods, but particularly our trade from

Bombay, China, and Australia. I believe that those trades would almost immediately pass into the hands of the American. He arrives in Liverpool with a freight of cotton, and is in a position to take a lower rate of freight out to India than the British shipowner. A United States ship has been in the habit of coming for some years and taking a cargo to China for half the freight at which a British shipowner can afford to send it. American ships are at present limited very much in the mode of return, so that we have not many of them. If those ships bringing cotton from America and going out to China had the power of bringing back a cargo of tea for English consumption, they would, I am quite satisfied, drive us out of the trade. They would start at a considerable advantage. Having arrived in Liverpool after a short passage of 15 or 20 days with a considerable freight on board, they would then be in a position to load at a lower rate for China, because the freight earned from the United States to China, after deducting the expenses, would place them in China in a better position than an English ship. An English ship that had brought home a freight of cotton from the United States would not be in the same position. We have no ships that go to the United States suitable for the China trade. We cannot get any freight whatever for a good British ship to the United States; that is owing partly to their nationality; their national feeling is such that no ship can be laid on in Liverpool for any port in the United States and get any freight. Orders are invariably issued by the correspondents of Liverpool merchants in America directing that the consignments shall all go in American ships, irrespectively of the question of price or the quality of the ship. I have known the finest ships ever built in this country laid on in Liverpool for New York, and which could get no freight. The benefit that could accrue to the consumer from the repeal of the Navigation Laws would be very little. In the different trades that I have mentioned, the utmost saving that could be made on the average rate of freight, supposing a foreigner brought the cargo, would be 15 or 20 per cent., which would be the fraction of a farthing per pound. The American Government is, I understand, prepared to relax their laws in proportion as the Government here relaxes our Navigation Laws. But they have no return to make at all proportional to what we should give them; they have no colonial trade for us to meddle with; the only thing of value which they could give us is their coasting trade."

Robert Anderson, Esq., who for 34 years has been a shipowner at South Shields, and who gave evidence before the House of Commons, added his opinions respecting

manning the navy, which evidence will be found in another part of this volume. His opinions regarding trade are as follow:—

“ I decidedly think it is not expedient to repeal what remains of the Navigation Laws. I do not think it expedient to allow the produce of the West India islands and other sugar-producing colonies to be brought to this country in the vessels of any country that would bring it cheapest, neither do I think we should allow the produce of Asia, Africa, and America to be imported into England after having landed in Europe in any vessels, because it would be giving the long voyage to the foreign instead of the British ship. My opinion upon this matter is not worth very much, because I am not a merchant; but it strikes me that this being the greatest market in the world, a very great accumulation of produce, as the Navigation Law is at present, is brought here; but if the importing merchant could bring his goods to England across the North Sea at any time, it would be his interest not to cause that accumulation in this country, so as to reduce the prices, when he could deposit his goods at Rotterdam, Antwerp, or Hamburg, and bring them over from thence when the prices induced him to do so. He would then have this market and the Continental market also. British merchants frequently send their goods to Rotterdam and other Continental ports. Vessels call at Cowes for orders to deliver their cargoes either in London, Antwerp, or elsewhere. It is frequently stipulated for in their charter party. The merchant would in that case have the choice of two markets, but he must now make his election for one or the other finally. He would not choose the worst in the first instance, but he would be in a position to avail himself of the best market, and would avoid the over-stocking of this one by having his goods thus deposited. I should think it would be an advantage to the merchant; but whether it would be an advantage to the consumer in this country or not is another question. At present a vessel calls at Cowes, and the merchant ascertains whether it is for his interest to send his cargo to a foreign port or to bring it to London. American ships call there in great numbers. It became apparent last year that American vessels were not calculated to carry goods; they are vessels built for carrying light articles, and heavy weights try them very much. Some of those ships came over in the depth of winter, and this is one of the worst passages; but I do not think this is saying anything against the American ships. Wheat is very heavy; a cargo of coal is about the same weight, but a cargo of teak timber or Australian oak is as heavy or heavier than wheat. I do not think our sailing tonnage since the conclusion of the war has increased

in the export and import trade equally with that of other countries, neither in proportion to the extended commerce nor the increased population of the country. The effect of throwing open the importation of the produce of the West India islands into this country would be, I think, to put trade very much into the hands of the Americans, because they now supply the West India islands to a very great extent, I may say almost entirely, with fish, lumber, and provisions; and having that trade they would be enabled, after delivering their cargoes in the West Indies, to take a cargo of sugar or coffee or other produce to London or Liverpool. Sugar is a heavy cargo, but it might be mixed with coffee and other produce. If the Americans had the West India trade they would have ships suited thereto; they now carry on a very lucrative trade there. I do not think shipowners derive a greater profit from the colonial than from any other trade; but it furnishes certain employment; it allows British tonnage a preference which they would not otherwise have. The foreigner can navigate at a cheaper rate, and therefore derives a greater degree of profit from trade. There is nothing in the Navigation Laws at present to prevent an English ship from taking a cargo to the United States and there shipping a cargo to the West Indies, but it is not done because American merchants are engaged in the production of the articles required, and send the goods to the West Indies in their own vessels. The trade between Prussia and this country is open both to Prussian and British subjects, but British ships do not compete successfully with Prussian. They keep in the trade because they must have some employment, and there is occasionally a demand for tonnage, and on the average they make it answer better than lying idle. They are trading now at a certain loss, but they do not give up the struggle, hoping that the times will mend. I do not know that there has been an actual diminution in the British tonnage trading between this country and Prussia, but the Prussians have increased much.

"I do not consider that the American Navigation Laws inflict any disadvantage upon us. The goods for that country are all ordered to go in American ships, and are insured in America. The merchants that order goods are interested in the vessels. We have a very small trade indeed to the United States with outward cargoes. The cargoes brought from America to this country consist of cotton, naval stores, turpentine, rice, and tobacco. I do not think many assorted cargoes are brought to this country from America. I consider the reduction of freight in the event of repealing these laws would not be to any great extent. On the passing the Act of Reciprocity the reduction of freights was considerable; but afterwards, when the trade became settled, it remained pretty steady at a small diminution. When we entered into the Reciprocity

Treaty with Prussia, Prussia did not, that I am aware of, make any concessions to us. She had the year previously laid very heavy duties on our shipping in retaliation for our having an alien duty upon produce imported in Prussian ships, and in order to induce us to relax that duty, laid a lastage duty on British ships, and she then had that lastage duty to take off in order to induce this Government to remove the alien duty. I have heard that they have given notice to the Government that they will reimpose that duty: it is perfectly competent for them to do so if they choose. I wish they had never been asked to take it off, they would soon have done it of themselves. It would have drawn all their trade to Courland and Livonia. I can speak positively to only one instance of the ill effect of the impression which has gone abroad that the Navigation Laws would be repealed, which is in the case of a relative who had given orders for a ship of 600 tons to be built for him at Sunderland, but who, in consequence of the agitation of the question, cancelled the order."

Duncan Dunbar, Esq., stated:—

"I am extensively engaged in shipping, and own about 24 ships, comprising 15,000 tons. I am chairman of the General Shipowners' Society of London. My ships trade to the Cape of Good Hope, India, China, and New South Wales, &c. I am also a merchant, and trade to Rio de Janeiro and all parts to the eastward of the Cape, but principally to New South Wales. My shipping and mercantile operations are about equal. I was examined before the Committee of the House of Commons last year on the Navigation Laws. I confirm the evidence then given, and am more satisfied than ever of the danger of throwing open our entire carrying trade to foreigners. I can furnish an account of the shipping entering and leaving Rio de Janeiro during the year 1847, and also of the ships leaving England for the Australian colonies, and of those which obtained cargoes, and which left in ballast. By these lists it appears that out of 744 ships of 170,995 tons in the aggregate which entered the port of Rio de Janeiro with cargo in 1847, 182 of 46,623 tons were American, and 135 of 33,930 tons British, and that of 659 ships of 198,308 tons which cleared with cargo, 63,753 tons were Americans, 31,735 British, 14,547 Brazilian, 13,149 Danish, 13,738 Swedish, 13,407 Hamburg, 11,283 Portuguese; and the remainder French, Sardinians, Belgians, Austrians, Spanish, and other foreign ships. Of the 31,735 British tons here mentioned as having cleared outwards with cargo, there were to British possessions 50 ships of 15,388 tons, and to foreign ports 44 ships of 16,347

tons. Of the 16,347 tons there cleared for Trieste nine ships of 3186 tons; to Belgium nine ships of 3223 tons; to Marseilles four ships, 1398 tons; to Bremen one ship, 209 tons; to Hamburg eight ships of 4051 tons; Rotterdam one ship, 241 tons; the River Plate five ships, 1784 tons; Constantinople three ships, 954 tons; and Syra four ships, 1301 tons. From the 1st of January, 1846, to 30th of June, 1847, there cleared from London for Sydney 61 ships, of which 18 loaded cargoes home, and the remaining 43 proceeded elsewhere in search of cargoes. Between the same periods there cleared outwards with cargo for Hobart Town 27 ships, of which 14 loaded home and 13 left in ballast; to Port Philip 25 ships, 12 loading home and 13 leaving in search of freight; to Port Adelaide, between the 21st November, 1846, and 30th June, 1847, 21 ships, seven of which only obtained cargoes. Those statements are derived from the Customs Returns of London.

" I have purchased ships while building and after they have been built. I have paid from £.12 to £.16 15s. per ton, which included the hull, masts, spars, chains, sails, rigging, and one suit of sails. In addition to the purchase-money paid in Sunderland, the expense of coppering has been about 25s. per ton more. The cabin fittings, provisions, extra sails, and other stores required for an Indian voyage would, altogether, including copper, amount to about £.4 a ton additional. The lower-priced ship stands on Lloyd's books A 1 10. The other ship, which cost £.16 15s., with a Baltic outfit, A 1 13. I was in Sunderland about a month ago, and attended a meeting of ship-owners and others at Sunderland. The meeting was most numerously attended and highly respectable, and, with the exception of two gentlemen, a Mr. Joshua Wilson and another, they were unanimous in their feeling that the repeal of the Navigation Laws would not only be an injury to the country at large, but ruinous to Sunderland. I was there at the launch of a ship of my own, and there was a large number of the working classes who appeared to me to be agreed upon the subject. Last year freights were very high on account of the famine. In all ports to the eastward of the Cape there is always quite sufficient British tonnage to bring home the goods to this country, and freights have not, upon the whole, been high. Taking the average of the last six or ten years, I do not think they are lower than in the six or ten preceding years. After the present great disturbance of our credit and finance, the freights in India rose to £.4 5s., the next month to £.5, but soon receded to £.4 5s. In 1845 the average in Calcutta was £.4 12s. 2d., and in 1846, £.4. In Bombay in 1845 it was £.2 14s. 2d., and in 1846, £.3 7s. 4d. In China in that year the average freights were £.5 5s. 9d. I have seen them in Calcutta £.2 10s., and at £.8 and even £.10 in the same year. The monsoon does not allow the ships to go in; and

after the large season fleet comes away the freights rise again.

"The export of copper ore from Adelaide is very greatly upon the increase. If shippers had offered a higher freight they would have had ships to take it; but having nothing but copper ore and a little wool, ships could not afford to come direct home with this freight, and the accumulation came so suddenly that they were not provided with tonnage. The rates of freight have decreased of late. I brought copper ore home at four guineas, and two ships were chartered at £4. 12s. 6d. At the time the copper ore was first discovered it was obtained in large quantities, and there being only one or two ships there, the shippers had to pay a higher freight; but in consequence of a large emigration going out since that period, the freights have fallen from four guineas to £3, and from that to as low as 10s. I should judge, therefore, that the supply of shipping to bring home the copper ore from Adelaide has increased fully in proportion to the increase of the commodity. It has come home as ballast for wool ships. I have bills of lading at the present moment at 10s. from Sydney, and at 30s., 40s., and 60s. from Adelaide. In consequence of its being a very heavy article, and being the chief item of export, vessels from Adelaide are not able to take a full cargo, and consequently are obliged to charge a higher freight upon that which they do take. I had one ship of 470 tons which brought home 600 tons of ore, but I was very angry with the master for doing it. Shippers of copper ore, by sending it on in small ships from Adelaide to Sydney and Hobart Town, get it brought home at 10s. per ton, they paying, of course, an additional freight of 20s. to 30s. per ton for taking it to those places. The present rates of freight for wool are 1d. and 1½d. per lb. It is lower than it was last year.

"In the year 1836 a new mode of measurement was adopted, by which the poops of ships were included in the measurement; and upon the additional measurement we not only pay lights, but we also pay dock dues, which is a very heavy additional burden upon us; but, in addition to that, I recollect having a ship in South America which measured 419 tons by the old measurement and 568 by the new. I think she went into three or four different States, and paid tonnage duty upon the higher rate in each port. I think the tonnage rate on the measurement of the ship ought to go no higher than the deck."

John Horsley Palmer, Esq., of the firm of Palmer, Mackillop, Dent, and Co., carrying on a trade with India and China, stated:—

"I am not aware of having sustained either injury or in-

convenience from the operation of the Navigation Laws. I am not a shipowner. I am not personally acquainted with the condition of the American trade at Canton at the present time. I think they purchase, as far as my information extends, principally by the export of American produce and manufactures, and by the use of credits upon London. American ships, I believe, have latterly carried a good deal of cargo from America. In some cases they have carried cargoes of cotton from the ports in the United States to Canton direct, where it meets the Bombay cotton from our settlements. Supposing the China trade were open as between Great Britain and America, the success of either country would, I presume, depend entirely upon which country could navigate their ships at the cheapest rate. It would also depend upon which country had the best trade outward to China. A country having bulky articles to send to China would work with advantage against a country having little to send. I do not know to what extent the American manufactures are taken in China, which now constitute a part of their cargoes. They have exported lead, as well as other articles, and also cargoes of cotton, but I am not sure whether it has been carried to any great extent. I cannot say which of the two countries would have the best chance of an outward freight to China, but I rather believe the Americans carry as much outward freight as we do. The cotton manufactures which the Americans take to China, of the coarser description are, I believe, called coarse domestics. They have a great deal of that trade. During the existence of the Company's charter there was a very considerable trade carried on in American ships coming from the United States to Liverpool, and there taking in British manufactures for China. It has been discontinued, in a great measure, from the facilities that all British ships have in going direct; they formerly could not go without the licence of the East India Company.

Patrick Francis Robertson, Esq., of the firm of Small and Company, trading to China and the East Indies, whose firm owns small shares in two vessels, principally as a matter of agency, stated:—

“ I can simply say that I never knew of any interference resulting from the operation of the Navigation Laws. The clause which prohibits the importation of the produce of Africa, Asia, or America from any port in Europe, does not create any obstacle or inconvenience in our trade, which is merely with the East Indies and China. There have been plenty of ships, with the exception of the last year, when there was a scarcity

of homeward tonnage. We never felt the inconvenience of the present state of affairs so as to look out for the means of evading it. We occasionally sent out English goods in American vessels from Liverpool to Canton during the commercial reign of the Company; and I think it highly probable that, in the event of the repeal of the Navigation Laws, the effect would be that the Americans, having the power to trade with this country, would be induced to make voyages to England with teas. I do not know that they would take out coarse woollens and load with tea; but I think they would offer to bring tea home. It is possible if heavy cargoes were in demand between the United States and Canton a British ship might be induced to take a cargo to America, and a fresh cargo from America to Canton, for the sake of bringing back a cargo to this country; but the whole question would probably depend upon the rate of freight at which each country could afford to sail its ships. I can speak to the fact that the woollen trade has fallen off very seriously, more particularly since the expiration of the Company's charter. It was a winning trade to the Company, because they had the power of naming their own price. The quantity of tea which the Chinese bring down has considerably increased, and prices at home are much lower. The Chinese say they can increase the quantity to any extent. I should think that the market for tea in Sweden must be very inconsiderable, and that one or two cargoes would supply the whole consumption of the country; but I think it very probable that, if Swedish vessels could bring home cargoes of tea from China to this country, to enter into the consumption of this country, that that shipping would increase, if they could do it more cheaply than our own vessels."

Augustus Bosanquet, Esq., West India merchant, of the firm of Bosanquet and Naghten, extensive importers of colonial produce from Demerara, stated:—

“ We agree with different parties here to send out their ships to Demerara, promising them cargo when they arrive, if we have any at that time, in order to induce them to furnish supplies of shipping regularly. Occasional inconvenience has been experienced, which must be everywhere the case. Insufficient supplies of tonnage will sometimes occur, but I do not recollect any particular difficulty. The average rate of freight paid, both for the importation of West India produce and exportation of supplies from this country, has been £2 10s. from Demerara, and £3 from Berbice. I do not think we could rely on a sufficient and regular supply of foreign tonnage if the Navigation Laws were repealed; we should have no security,

because I observe that the freight of ships in many places fluctuates very much according to the demand, so that foreigners would raise the price of freight in the market without mercy if there were a short supply of shipping. I think foreigners would do that more than British shipowners, because they are not tied to us. British shipowners are under obligations to us; we ship by them year after year, and there is an understanding with them. With the foreigners there could not be that understanding. Having no connection with the colony the same ships would not visit regularly, and we should be obliged to depend upon chance vessels. The present depression of the West India interest chiefly arises from their inability to sustain the competition of the foreign produce, especially sugar, which has recently been admitted to sale in the British market for home consumption. In Cuba, planters can raise sugar by slave labour, I dare say, at 6s. a cwt., when we are paying 20s. or 30s. If, by the repeal of the Navigation Laws, foreign ships were freely permitted to bring sugar from the British colonies, and also from Brazil, Cuba, and other foreign countries, any reduction of freight consequent upon such a measure would affect equally the produce of all countries. It would tend to raise the rate of freight in foreign ships, and would increase the quantity of shipping proportionate to the raising of the freight, causing the rate in our own ships to fall to their level. With regard to the freight paid from the different sugar countries it would leave the relative position of each the same, because whatever advantage applied to the one would apply to the other. I do not exactly assume that if the Navigation Laws were repealed British shipping would be entirely withdrawn from the whole trade between the West Indies and Great Britain; but I fear it would have that effect, and I think so because (and I would wish to give reasons as far as I can) I think the shipowners are hardly paid for what they now do. My view is not speculative; it results from this, that if freights are to fall (and fall they must in order that an advantage may be gained), if the shipowner does not get paid a sufficiency for his freight at present, and he is to be paid less, he must abandon the trade. I do not conceive that a British ship and a foreign ship would not enter into competition with each other in any trade; but certainly, with regard to the West Indies, I do not think they could do so with success. I have heard that there has been an expression in favour of the repeal of the Navigation Laws from Jamaica, but I really believe it has only been that of drowning men catching at straws; they put out their hands to see if they could gain anything by an alteration."

Being asked—

“Would you call an expression of this kind a mere catching

at straws: 'that the benefit to Jamaica from such relaxation of the Navigation Laws would be infinite; it is the most desirable boon that her inhabitants could solicit or receive from Her Majesty's Government; it would help Jamaica out of her difficulties;' this coming from the Legislative Assembly?"

He replied—

"It is an extremely strong expression. I have not seen that document before, and cannot conceive how those expressions could have been put upon paper; for I must say, speaking plainly, that I think them quite contrary to the facts of the case. And with respect to a memorial from the parish of Hanover, in Jamaica, which says, that the British ship-owner is protected by the Navigation Laws compelling the memorialists to pay a freight nearly double the amount they would pay if they were permitted to ship in other vessels; that a large amount of American shipping leaves the island in ballast, which might, but for the protection afforded to British shipowners, carry away the memorialists' produce; that the memorialists would thus obtain their staves, provisions, and other American commodities at a cheaper rate, as well as transmit their sugar, rum, &c., I think the question is not whether a reduction of 2s. 6d. would remove the injury that the planter at present labours under from the small value of his crops, but whether 1s. 3d. would do it. Now, I think, if you doubled that 2s. 6d. instead of halving it, it would be much nearer the mark; say 5s. Those who signed the memorial calculated upon the advantage, not only of a reduction in the freight of the sugar to England, but also upon a considerable reduction in the freight of the supplies received from America. Any advantage which you give to the planter would of course be so much to his benefit; but the slice which you have to cut off is here so small, being only a fractional part of 2s. 6d., that it would be an infinitesimal part of his gain or loss. As to the possibility of an increase of the general commerce of the world resulting from the repeal of the Navigation Laws, I think a great error has been committed in supposing that trade can be forced. In all instances in which trade has been forced, I have seen nothing but ruin and dismay follow. The end of undue competition has been unreqired labour on the part of those engaged in it. With respect to those sugar colonies with which I am particularly acquainted, no material benefit would accrue to them from the cheaper freight which the foreign ship might afford over the British ship. I think the disadvantages would fully counterbalance any advantage which might be gained. In the West or in the East Indies, supposing foreign ship could afford to navigate more cheaply, they would unquestionably beat our vessels in the same trade. I think it a self-

evident fact that it would be most dangerous to rely on the precarious supply of foreign freight, if our own ships were beaten out of the trade. Circumstances might arise which, by leaving us entirely dependent upon the foreigner, might very much embarrass at periods the whole of our commerce. If from any foreign source we received a supply of shipping which would have the effect of cheapening the freight, the advantage gained would be counterbalanced, or nearly so, by the disadvantages also attaching to it. The advantage might be cheaper carriage, the counterbalance would be extreme difficulty of insurance. If it were conceded that the planter, being able to insure his produce, would be willing to pay something more for freight, the difficulty would still remain, because if we relied so much upon foreign shipping there might be nothing but foreign shipping available, which we could not insure upon on the present terms of 'ship or ships.' We effect our insurances by 'ship or ships,' taking a policy, say for £10,000, which continues in force until it has run out by the arrival of the produce insured; we then effect another; but we have what they call, technically, no gap in our policies. It is understood at the insurance office that whatever produce we have will be insured; therefore, I have no doubt in the world that if our policy were to run out, and the clerk were to omit to make out another, and a loss should occur when we were uninsured, the office would pay it. We insure with a company, and that company takes us for honest people, willing to play with them a fair game; but if they once caught us tripping, I have no doubt they would close their books against us. We have a perfect understanding with the underwriters; we have no difficulty in recovering. If foreign ships were admitted to the import trade equally with British ships, the underwriters most decidedly would not feel equal confidence, and take their risks at the same rate of premium.

"I will state upon what my opinion, that British could not successfully compete with foreign shipping, is, in part founded. I think, as I before remarked, the British shipowner has for a long time past been badly paid. At one period our risks were telling very much against the insurance office, our freights being low; and I found that the ships came home, as far as I could ascertain, half-manned, and this in proportion as our freights fell. We paid, one year, to the 'Marine' and to the 'London' £1,100 less than we received, and that was not upon any great total loss. A great part of it, and, perhaps, the major part, was general average, which I believe very much arose from the ships not being found at that time as they ought to have been, and I laid this to the fact of their being insufficiently paid. From the falling of freights and some other cause, the shipowners endeavoured to reduce their expenditure, so as to make a profit out of the ship; therefore I argue

that if they could not support their position under those circumstances they could not do it at all with a strong competition against them. The freights in the protected trade must be affected to a certain degree by the freights of the unprotected trade, but not so much as they would be directly. The rate of freight from British Guiana has not been subject to considerable fluctuation. In six years we have paid 4s., and I think we have paid 1s. 6d. that has been the outside fluctuation; but the 4s. included freight out free, whilst the instances of the 1s. 6d., arose from fortuitous circumstances. An Indian coolie ship came in with rice, and having no friends, and wanting to get away immediately, was willing to take freight at any price; and we had, I recollect, once a freight at 1s.

"To show the understanding which now exists between parties concerned with the ship and the insurance office: A company which was in the habit of insuring its vessels found, when two of them were in the Channel and one in the dock, that they had no policy running; and their clerk was, in consequence, desired to take out a fresh policy, which he did, by effecting a full assurance on the ships still out, and an assurance at a smaller rate on the ship that had arrived, to cover any damage that might, on examination, be found to have occurred to the cargo. The owners of the vessels, however, considered this mode of insurance in the light of a fraud, and reassured the latter vessel at full rates, on the ground that, never intending to have a gap in their policy, they were bound in honour to pay the entire rate of assurance. Two years after this the same parties committed the same error; that is to say, they had ships running, and no policy open. As it was evident, however, from the former transaction, that they intended to have no gap in their policy, the office paid a loss of considerable magnitude which occurred at that time without hesitation, though not legally claimable."

Russell Ellice, Esq., a merchant engaged in the West Indian trade, of the firm of Ellice, Kinnear, and Company, interested in the colonies of Tobago and Grenada, stated:—

"I receive considerable consignments of produce from Tobago and Grenada, entirely in ships despatched from England, the rate of freight paid upon imports and exports, averages from £.4 to £.4 10s., excepting last year, when there was a great scarcity of freight home. The exports, and occasionally the stores, are taken out for nothing; but when we pay freight in other ships with which we are not very well connected, we pay from £.1 to 30s. We never experienced a want of shipping; last year

was the first ; £.4 10s. is an extraordinary freight. From other colonies, with which I am not so well acquainted, it is £.3. I think £.4 reasonable for the merchant to pay, and an amount from which the shipowner can fairly earn his due. At Trinidad the ship can go round to the different points and collect her own cargo. In Tobago, on the contrary, the ship can only visit different sides of the island, and they employ a smaller vessel, called a drogher, to bring the sugar to her, the expense of which is very great, and falls upon the ship, and which would not be affected by any alteration of the Navigation Laws. I do not consider, as a merchant shipowner and West Indian proprietor, that the repeal of the Navigation Laws would assist us in the least, as far as I can judge. I have not in the course of my commercial transactions experienced any injury or inconvenience from them, and I should think the majority of the West Indian merchants in London are of the same opinion as myself."

Michael M'Chlery, Esq., of the house of Cavan Brothers and Company, extensive importers of colonial produce from the West Indies, stated :—

" We have one ship. I am interested in property in the West Indies to a large extent, in British Guiana, Trinidad, Barbadoes, St. Vincent, and St. Lucia, and in all the principal colonies excepting Jamaica. Our importations are made entirely in British ships. We have never experienced inconvenience from an insufficient supply of tonnage with the exception of last year. The average rate of freight has been from British Guiana 2s. 6d. to 3s. a cwt., and from the other colonies 4s. a cwt. The great difference is caused by the produce being put on board the ships in the rivers of British Guiana by the shippers ; and in the other cases the ships or their boats are sent to the shipping ports of the estates. If we charter a vessel for the voyage out and home, we generally calculate the freight upon what she will bring home, and in that case any goods which the charterer puts on board are taken out free ; but we also send out goods upon which we pay and receive freight at about £.1 to 25s. a ton. If we could send out a full cargo of goods for £.1, we might then bring the return cargo home for £.3 per ton. We have never chartered from England to the United States in the first instance, to take lumber or some other goods from the United States to the West Indies, and to bring back sugar to England ; but in some cases I know that it has been done. The proprietors out there who have ships here send their vessels

occasionally to America to take lumber down to the West Indies. That trade has, I should think, very much fallen off. The Americans take the supplies direct on cheaper terms, I think, than we could send ships round. American ships that take lumber and provisions to the British West Indies land their supplies and take away money in payment. We cannot afford to supply produce so cheaply as they can get it in the neighbouring foreign islands, and they generally leave in ballast. They occasionally ballast with molasses. Some return to the United States direct; others, I think, go to Porto Rico, Cuba, and other foreign colonies, where they take in sugar, molasses, and other produce.

" I think that by the repeal of the Navigation Laws, so as to admit foreign vessels to bring sugars to this market from foreign places, the competition would be against the British producer. Cuba, for example, is close to America, from whence I believe the Cubans receive their principal supplies in American ships. It would, therefore, be a great facility and advantage to the Cuban producer to send to this country his sugar in American ships, which he is not allowed to do at present; and we find that the competition is very much against us now in the facilities which they already have in sending home their sugars. I believe British ships take sugar from Cuba to Hamburg, and American ships the same occasionally. The whole trade from Cuba to this country is principally carried on in British vessels. I believe there may be a few Spanish vessels employed. It might be, if the state of the law admitted it, that many American ships, of a class suitable for that employment, would carry supplies to our West India colonies, and bring sugar from those colonies. There are not many vessels of that kind that come to our colonies now, but probably they would carry on their trade with a better class of shipping than they do now if there was the inducement to put into the trade a better class of ships, which would of course displace a similar amount of English tonnage. American ships would certainly have an advantage over the British ships, inasmuch as they could do it cheaper."

Henry Davidson, Esq., of the firm of Davidsons and Company, importers of colonial produce from Jamaica, St. Vincent, Grenada, British Guiana, and Tobago, and most of the colonies, stated:—

" I am not aware that we have in the course of our commercial operations sustained any practical inconvenience from

the operation of the Navigation Laws. Our importations are chiefly made in ships despatched purposely from England, or else we have been ships' husbands and part-owners of the ships. The ordinary freight on goods exported is about 20s. and from that to 25s. or 30s. a ton, and the ordinary rate of freight from Demerara or Berbice is about £2 10s. or £3 a ton. In Grenada there is drogherage, which necessarily makes it more, as that expense falls upon the ships. In Grenada it is about £4 a ton; and at St. Vincent's I think much the same. In Jamaica it is £4 10s., and on the north side £5 a ton; the drogherage there is very heavy, as the ports are much exposed to the sea. As far as I am able to judge, or have given attention to the subject, I do not think a repeal of the Navigation Laws would benefit me in any material degree either as a West India merchant or proprietor. I do not think I have had any reason to complain of the Navigation Laws; and I do not know any particular impediments that there are in the law as it now stands. Supposing the British shipping were beaten out of the West India trade by the Americans or any other foreigners, it would be very bad for those colonies. I do not know what difficulty there might be in freight home, but in freight out there would be a great inconvenience. I should say from every class of persons that I have spoken to it is most decidedly not the opinion of the West India body that great benefit would arise to the West Indies from the repeal of the Navigation Laws."

Alexander Geddes, Esq., a planter of Jamaica, and who has been actively engaged up to a recent period as an agent for the management of every description of property, in that country, stated:—

" For the last four or five years I have been engaged as Member of the Legislature, and chief magistrate of the district, and have kept myself conversant with the details of agriculture and every circumstance affecting the products of those countries. I am aware that there have been from the West India islands petitions sent to the Government asking for a repeal of the Navigation Laws, and that those petitions have come in several instances from that colony with which I have been so long and intimately connected; but I believe most firmly, indeed I know, that the question is not understood, and that people labouring under the most severe pressure and the most terrible exigency readily grasp at any chance of escaping from the perils in which they find themselves, whether that chance

is merely fanciful or not. They entirely overlook this consideration, that were the Navigation Laws of this country relaxed, the slave-owner of Brazil and Cuba, who is already bearing them to the ground and to utter ruin, would benefit to the same extent as they would; and under such circumstances, to my mind, they would acquire no real advantage by any opening up of the carrying trade to other countries. In the freightage of my consignments I have solely employed vessels of this country. I might add, that the vessels sent to Jamaica for the carriage of produce were always of the first class; they were regular traders. We could rely upon them with unfailing certainty, and during late years, when bills drawn on account of the contingencies of estates were in many instances only accepted when the produce was transmitted, it was a matter of the very highest consequence to have those shipments regularly made. Every possible facility, I think, that could be given by regularity and certainty in the arrival of vessels was afforded to us. During my long experience in Jamaica, which is about 28 years, I have known no general inconvenience experienced for the want of tonnage until the past year, and that arose not only from the extraordinary demand for vessels in this country, but also from this fact, that for a long course of years the crops, from the disorganised state of society and from the severe droughts under which the colony had laboured, had become excessively diminished. Last year, owing to a variety of fortuitous circumstances, the largest crop produced since the emancipation of the slaves in 1838 was made, and that of itself was sufficient to account for the large quantity of produce left over. The average rates of freight for years have settled down into 4s. 6d. per cwt., or £4 10s. per ton, and 5d. for rum. At the Havannah and other shipping places in Cuba freights seldom exceed £3 per ton; but if I owned a ship I would just as soon send my vessel to Cuba as to Jamaica, admitting that I got £4 10s. a ton at the latter place, and for these reasons:—Jamaica and the other British colonies, although very fertile, consist in general of small districts; those districts have their own particular outlets to the sea, and the consequence is, with one or two exceptions, that produce is delivered, not at one great port, but in a scattered way along the coast. This has given rise in most of the West Indian colonies, but particularly in Jamaica, to a system of what is called drogherage; that is to say, that the vessels have to be provided with decked-boats for collecting the produce along the coast; that is a very considerable expense, and the vessels taking such produce have to insure those boats, because they are liable for the loss of the produce. The packages at the Havannah are incomparably more convenient than those which we have; they consist of boxes. The detention of late years from the reduced quantities of produce imported from Jamaica,

has been excessive ; whereas at the Havannah vessels receive such despatch that they sometimes make two voyages in the place of the one made from Jamaica. In the event of the trade being completely free I do not apprehend that there would be a great reduction in the freights. The great source of the American's profit is the celerity with which he carries through all his transactions, and I do not think he would be satisfied to wait the time that vessels have for many years had to do in Jamaica for his cargo. The crews of the ships during the three or four months' detention are invariably attached to the ships ; the delay is caused by the collection of the cargo. Supposing that to take place which the Act of Parliament has provided for, namely, that after a short time the sugar of Cuba is to come into this country upon the same terms as the sugar of our own colonies, and that the Navigation Laws were done away with, and Americans enabled to bring the produce of Cuba to London, the sugar trade between Cuba and England would be principally, I should say, carried on in American ships. Direct or any sort of taxation in the United States is lightly felt, and in some respects scarcely known ; and, in the next place, the American has all the means within himself, and at a very cheap rate, of building his vessel and fitting it out for the voyage.

" Jamaica, though comparatively a small country, varies probably more than any other of the same extent in the qualities of its soil. The cost of production during those three or four years after the termination of the apprenticeship rose to 26s. a cwt., or £.26 per ton. During the last three or four years, owing to the abandonment of estates, the price of labour has fallen, and the cost of production has come under £.23 per ton. I have no doubt that many more will be abandoned ere long, and that if the remaining estates sustain the exigencies of the colony, the cost of production from an increased supply of labour may come down to £.20 a ton. Taking that £.20 a ton as the probable basis of the planter's operations, as the cost of production in that colony, the freight would be as 4s. 6d. to 20s. I travelled in Cuba in 1841 ; the price of produce was then equal to 10s. per cwt. at the sea coast. In one new district, called Cienfuegas, four years before my visit, there were only 25 estates in cultivation ; but in the four years which had intervened there were 50 additional estates laid down. The Cuban planter can afford to produce sugar at £.10 a ton ; my recent information goes lower than that. I have no hesitation in saying that the repeal of the Navigation Laws could not influence the freights beyond 10s. or 12s. per ton, and there are many countervailing considerations even to this amount. British colonial tonnage has been in a great degree superseded by American tonnage under the reciprocity treaties already. Our supply of lumber, and all those articles

which now we get from America in American bottoms, had it not been for the reciprocity treaties, would have been supplied from Canada. We should have had for Jamaica alone nearly 25,000 barrels a year of salted pork, and that most certainly would have come chiefly from Canada. When I first knew Jamaica the quantity of Irish provisions consumed was enormous; we knew no other. Nothing could equal the quality of the salt beef, and the salt pork, and the butter; but we have no such provisions now; they are totally excluded. I can state that the Customs duty in one year on salt pork from the States and Canada approached £25,000 sterling, and I consider it very nearly displaced Irish pork to that extent; not quite, because at that time the free classes were the great consumers. Latterly the persons who were in slavery have participated in the consumption of those articles. I think if, from a relaxation of the Navigation Laws, our produce came home in American ships, that it would raise an additional difficulty in our outward freight from England. A system has grown up by which the shipowners meet the convenience of the merchants and the planters. A vessel carries out the supplies at the commencement of the crops, the hoops, the nails, the engine coals, oil, and so on, to enable the planters to commence the crop, and waits almost invariably for the sugar. If those ships were not to expect a return cargo of sugar, I do not think that such facility and regularity are likely to exist. The relaxation of protective duties, which has been the policy of late years in this country, has been ruinous to the colonies. The policy, if pursued, will obliterate the larger British colonies in the British West Indian Archipelago from the list of the civilized countries. Allow me to say distinctly and emphatically that the emancipation has little or nothing to do with our difficulties. We were rapidly surmounting that great change. I think the Assembly of Jamaica entirely wrong in the view taken of the Navigation Laws in their memorial. I have stated the cost of production; I have stated the difference of freights between those now existing at the Havannah and at Jamaica; and the Committee can judge how far it would be a relief to those colonies. I look on that demand as the mere frantic exclamation of a greatly distressed people. In the Assembly of Jamaica at this day, I am sorry to say, there are very few country gentlemen, very few planters. The planting interest is very badly represented."

William Robertson Sandbach, Esq., a merchant of Liverpool, connected with the West India trade, and also a proprietor in Demerara, stated :—

“ I believe our produce is now carried from Demerara as cheaply as the produce of any other country. The rates of freight current in Demerara are about the same as those in other places, particularly in Porto Rico, where foreign tonnage is available. Of Porto Rico I can speak positively. I have a price current from Demerara, dated the 18th of May, 1847, in which the quotations of freight are :—‘ Last engagements, 4s. to 4s. 6d. for sugar, 4½d. to 5d. for rum; tonnage very scarce, and all the vessels in port fully provided for.’ A circular of Porto Rico of the 25th of May, 1847, says :—‘ British vessels are much sought after at £5 10s. to £6., other flags at £4 10s. to £5., for Cowes and the North Sea.’ A price current, dated Demerara, 18th of February, 1848, gives the quotations of freight :—‘ To London, 2s. 9d. sugar; to Liverpool, 2s. 6d.; Dublin, 2s. 9d.; tonnage becoming more abundant and freight scarce.’ A price current, dated Porto Rico, 10th of February, 1848, states :—‘ Freights we quote £3 to £3 10s. for Cowes and the North Sea.’

“ The class of vessels that would probably come to Demerara seeking freight, in the event of the repeal of the Navigation Laws, would be American. In the first instance they would be the vessels that now bring supplies to Demerara. They come in great numbers, and always take back specie or bills. I do not think such ships could be insured at the same rate as the vessels which are regularly in the trade. If the ports were open to ships from all parts of the world, produce which is often shipped under a policy ‘ by ship or ships’ would probably be put on board vessels of which the underwriters could not possibly obtain any information; and, therefore, I think it would be sure to raise the premiums of insurance. The underwriter might protect himself in such a case by only insuring British ships; but there would then be a difficulty to the planter, because he would be restricted by that circumstance to British tonnage, and would not be able to take advantage of a foreign ship if one offered. I believe a knowledge that those ports were open to other than British vessels would diminish the amount of British shipping now frequenting them. There would not be the same certainty for regular traders; and they would meet with greater difficulty and delay in loading, and perhaps might have to take the produce at lower rates, and would, I think, very soon be driven out of the trade. The planters would then be left ill provided. The freights paid in that trade now cannot be very profitable, because, though we frequently have there ships seeking freight, I do not think there

is an instance of any such transient ship becoming a regular trader; they make one voyage, or sometimes two, and then discontinue it. I refer to vessels belonging to men who have no connexion with the island. The supplies are generally sent out quarterly; and if any circumstance were to drive the regular ships out of the trade, there would be no depending upon getting them out with the same punctuality, and the planters would probably have to pay higher rates of freight. The stores are not articles worth paying a high freight for, so that they would form no inducement to foreign vessels. I suppose if power were given to foreign ships to bring produce from the British West Indies to the British market, the same power would be given to them to bring produce from the foreign West Indies to the British market, and therefore the foreign planter would participate in any benefit that the British planter derived from the regulation.

“ I am a shipowner to the extent of four ships, and can say that British shipowners could not bear a reduction of 12 per cent. upon their freights, if the ships were kept in the same condition as they are now—12 per cent. would be $4\frac{1}{2}d.$ upon a cwt. of sugar,—and that loss which would be sufficient to drive out the present class of ships from the trade, would only be a relief to the West Indians of $4\frac{1}{2}d.$ upon 23s., the present price of a cwt. of that commodity. I have never, as a shipowner, had occasion to complain of any grievance from that part of the Navigation Laws relating to the proportion of British and foreign seamen. Many of the sailors belonging to my ships go frequent voyages. We have 10 or 12 men who have made repeated voyages in the same ship, and I may venture to say we never send a ship to sea without having some seamen who have been the previous voyage. The apprenticeship system does not weigh upon me. I believe I should employ the same number of boys under any circumstances.”

Thomas Bouch, Esq., of Liverpool, stated:—

“ My firm has been connected with the West India trade for 40 years as commission agents, brokers, and merchants, principally with Demerara. The estates with which we have been connected have almost without exception been estates not under mortgage, and therefore the agents have had it in their power to ship their produce in any vessels that might be at the colony, and on the best terms they could. I have in this paper a list of the freights that we have paid since 1837*. Within the

* The highest amount paid, according to Mr. Bouch's table here referred to, for sugar, which may be considered the staple article, was 3s. 1d. in 1847 (a year of unusually high freight); in 1840 it was 2s. 8½d.; and the lowest, which was in 1837, was 2s. 8½d. The average does not exceed 2s. 6d.

last few years we have contracted with the owners of British ships of the best character to take out fuel and other general necessaries, and to bring back sugar and rum at a certain rate, charging us nothing upon the stores out. In 1837 by shipping our stores in the way described, we received our sugar home at 3s. 7½d., and rum at 4½d. In 1838 the same operation was arranged at 3s. 6½d. for sugar, and 4d. for rum; in 1840 at 3s. 6d. and 4d., and in 1841 at 3s. 10d. and 4d.; and in the three following years our returns appear to have been made at 3s. 6d. and 4d. These arrangements arose from the necessity for a regular supply of fuel, the want of which is tantamount to a loss of the crop. If the regular trading vessels were withdrawn, especially from the Demerara trade, we might suffer an amount of inconvenience which I could scarcely appreciate. As it is, we have had complaints sometimes that the estates were out of fuel, and when freight has been reduced so low as to discourage owners from sending their vessels, we have thereby sustained serious inconvenience. I should be afraid to try the experiment of employing foreign as well as British ships for the purpose, because it might derange the transport of our supplies. When I look at the rates of freight we have paid, and on inquiry find that those rates are even lower than what have been paid to vessels from Cuba and Brazil, I think I can be at no loss in stating that the permission to employ foreign ships would be no advantage; and I am inclined to think the British planter would be injured by it. If the Navigation Laws were repealed we should consider what foreign vessels would probably do. My opinion is that an American vessel would go to the West Indies with stores, and there load a cargo of sugar for England. On arrival she would obtain the best employment she could get, without reference to the wants of the West India merchant, and would probably take a cargo to her own country, leaving the planter to seek another conveyance for his fuel, &c. We should have difficulty in doing as we have done, because we should not know what our correspondents in the colony were doing, and might enter into agreements with shipowners which would involve us in serious pecuniary obligations. If foreign vessels were introduced into the trade the English shipowner might say, 'I do not know what amount of foreign tonnage I may find in your port, or whether I shall be able to fill up my vessel at all;' and would hesitate in accepting an offer of such portion of a cargo as we could ensure him and probably take other employment. I do not see that the planter by ceasing to employ English vessels would save anything, if we may judge from the present comparison of freight."

Being asked—

“ If by an alteration of our Navigation Laws we were to let in foreign ships to every portion of our trade, while our ships

in other colonies, and in those countries themselves, would be working under the restrictions of the Navigation Laws of those countries, do not you think our shipowners must work at a great disadvantage?"—

Mr. Bouch answered—

" The question as I understand it is, if we admitted the Americans, for example, to all the privileges enjoyed by British vessels, and, at the same time, there was not a perfect reciprocity between the two countries, American vessels would have a larger market than English. The question answers itself. I would instance the position of Holland with relation to Java. I understand that their commercial marine is very dependent upon their trade with that colony; and if the Dutch were asked what the position of their trading ships would be were they to part with that colony, I think they would express a fear that the consequences would be ruinous. They build their ships under disadvantageous circumstances, neither am I aware they can man them more economically than we can; and yet they have thriven, and, I suppose, chiefly from the maintenance of their trade with that single colony, under protection. I was told that when the King of Holland first commenced the Java trade the Company had three ships, and when he died they had 300; and these are some of the finest ships in the East India trade. I take it that the trade of Holland would languish, and run a risk of becoming extinct, if it were not for the trade with that colony. I do not compare the trade of this country with that of a single colony such as Java; but I think the case apposite when speaking of the extinguishment of a system. We consumed last year in this country 290,000 tons of sugar, of which 50,000 tons only were imported from foreign places; 240,000 tons appear to have been produced in our own dependencies, all of which we carried under protection and at a moderate freight; and we might hope to produce as much sugar in our own colonies, and carry it ourselves, as would supply the whole kingdom. When I look at what the Dutch do, and consider the stake we have, and that it is not a matter of a single island, but one affecting the consumption of 290,000 tons of sugar, it makes one anxious as to how we are to be benefited by change in a degree commensurate with the risk we are running.

" With respect to the warehousing system in this country, there is at present a double tie, arising from the state of our Navigation Laws and also from the extent of our trading capital. If the Navigation Laws were repealed the trade of other nations would no longer be influenced to aid in the deposit of property in this country as at present. A merchant might make arrangements under a change of the laws which he could not make now. There are adventitious circumstances regulating

the shipment of goods over which the merchant has no control, occurring, as they do frequently, after his schemes are laid and when his ship is in another country. The capital of this country draws produce here now; and it is aided in doing so, even beyond its own natural ability, by the Navigation Laws. I think great encouragement is now given under the Navigation Laws to warehousing in this country. The goods intended for consumption on the Continent would, I think, as a matter of course, be directed to the Continent. No one would warehouse his goods in this country, knowing when consigning them that they would be most likely transhipped. My feeling is, that there are two circumstances in favour of this country being a warehousing country. We are possessed of a large trading capital, and have protecting laws and a preponderance of tonnage, inducing the deposit of goods here; but if every nation were allowed to compete with us, a portion of those goods might be warehoused elsewhere.

“ Instead of offering my own opinion as to the probability of our successfully competing with the Americans in the event of the repeal of the Navigation Laws, I would give that of the Americans, which is one of great exultation at the prospect; and when I say there is a difference of opinion with regard to the repeal of the Navigation Laws in Liverpool, I should observe that among those connected with English shipping and the colonial trade there is no difference of opinion. They are all fearful of a change, and dread it very much. I am aware that some of the West India colonies have petitioned for the repeal of the Navigation Laws; but I think they have not fully weighed the consequences; they have been so depressed as to be very much like drowning men, anxious to catch at anything. But I found my evidence upon my own experience; and when I see that foreign vessels do not now carry sugar at a cheaper rate than British vessels, it leads me to the conclusion that there is not much good to be obtained, as regards our sugar trade, from a repeal of the Navigation Laws.”

Francis Shand, Esq., a merchant and shipowner, carrying on business in Liverpool, stated:—

“ I am a proprietor in Antigua. I am not aware of having, in the course of my commercial transactions, experienced either injury or inconvenience from the practical operation of the Navigation Laws. As a merchant I do not desire their repeal. I believe the freights from our West India colonies are at the present moment, and that they have been for a long time, as low as any foreigners are carrying for. It would create con-

siderable difference, because ships in my trade are a component part of the system by which I conduct my business; they are as necessary for the transport of my remittances as for the products of the estates. I am obliged to convey to my estates a large quantity of stores. I am not only a proprietor, but a lessee and a consignee of a large number of estates in the island of Antigua, and it is necessary to convey to them considerable quantities of stores. The rate of freight at present in Antigua, and it has been the same for some years, is £.4 a ton; but the consideration of carrying out the stores freight-free, which they do, is fully £.1 a ton, which reduces the freight homewards to £.3 a ton, and the ship being subject to a charge for drog-herage, of nearly 6d. a cwt., it reduces it still further to £.2 10s. a ton. Permission to foreign ships to carry our produce would interfere with our present arrangements, inasmuch as they would not carry out the stores. The necessity for our mode of proceeding was evidenced both in the last year and in this year. Last year there was such a demand for vessels that if we had not provided for the freightage of the sugar of Antigua, the planters would have had to pay £.5, £.6, or £.7, as in many other places they had; and this year we have been obliged to send vessels to carry our stores out at a much earlier period than usual. The vessels are, consequently, lying there at a considerable loss, and it would be very inconvenient to have a foreigner coming in just as the crop is ready for shipping, saying, 'I am ready to carry your produce home at a cheaper rate.' We could not maintain two systems. One set of ships must perform the whole operation. We could not have English ships running out with stores for nothing, and the foreigner bringing home the sugar. Last year the crop being large, and brought to maturity all at one period, it was as much as we could do to bring it home in seven vessels. A large portion was also shipped in the hurricane months, and the Americans are very shy of us at that season. Those vessels did not all carry stores out, but most of them did. I am aware that the legislature of Antigua petitioned the British Government for a repeal of the Navigation Laws. I think the petitioners expressed themselves something to the effect,—that though they had looked at the Navigation Laws as very important to Great Britain, yet, as they had been mistaken with regard to many other principles which they entertained, they fancied they must have been mistaken in that, and, therefore, prayed for their repeal, as several other colonies had done. They are looking in desperate circumstances, I presume, for assistance from any quarter, come at what cost it may to others. They forgot that the Navigation Laws being repealed would be as great a boon to the foreigner as to themselves. I do not think they could, in case of a repeal of those laws, get the services of the vessels which they require so cheaply as at

present; and whatever beneficial alteration were extended to them would be equally extended to foreigners.

"Flour, staves, pitch, pine, &c. are imported into Antigua, chiefly from the United States; white pine and salt fish from British America. The American ships take back dollars or English money, nothing else; because they say they can purchase their produce in Cuba or Porto Rico much more advantageously than they can from us. I do not consider it a grievance to be compelled to take the proportion of British seamen required by the Navigation Laws. I have always preferred having Englishmen. I am chairman of the West India Association, and I think I speak the opinion of that body—that the repeal of the Navigation Laws is not desirable."

Josias Booker, Esq., a merchant and shipowner of Liverpool, and chairman of the Royal Insurance Company and Royal Bank, stated:—

"I resided for 13 years in the colony of Demerara, but have no interest in West India property. I am the owner of ships engaged in the West India trade, and have the management of others. The average rates of freight from Demerara for the last seven years have been 2s. 6 $\frac{3}{4}$ d. per cwt. for sugar, and 3 $\frac{1}{4}$ d. per imperial gallon for rum, with the usual prime. Those rates have not been remunerative to me as a shipowner for several years past. The vessels I now own I have offered for sale at different times, but have not been able to find a purchaser without a sacrifice. The vessels alluded to were built under my own inspection, every regard being had to economy in construction, and suitability for the trade they were intended for. I have an account before me of the *Joka Harracks*, of 349 tons burthen, new measurement, a 12 A 1 ship; she cost, in December 1840, ready for sea, £6000; she is 294 tons, old measurement, so that she cost me about £22 a ton. After deducting 5 per cent. interest, and making no allowance for wear and tear, the amount to her debit is now £3776 8s. 9d. I have another vessel of 200 tons. I offered them both for sale, and should be most willing to take the price that now stands to their debit. The assignees of Messrs. Barton, Islam, and Co. have 16 ships, 13 of which were valued by one of the owners at £60,000; and such is the state of alarm at the prospect of an alteration of the Navigation Laws that I do not believe we shall realise more than £37,000. With reference to the speed of our ships, I have no fear of successful competition with foreigners. If the Navigation Laws were abrogated the Americans, unquestionably, would compete with us in

carrying sugar. Their vessels are not strong enough at present to carry a heavy cargo of that description, but I have no doubt they would build other vessels fit for the trade, because they could afford to carry at a lower rate. Their provisions do not cost from 25 to 30 per cent. so much as ours; and even with provisions at the same rate they would beat us. They have very little or no taxation; and if I as a shipowner make £500 a year by my interest in a ship or ships, and there is an American gentleman that owns a similar property, and also makes £500 a year, his income in America will be a very different thing to mine a year in England. The average rates of freight previously to 1840 were 3s. 6d. and 4s. for sugar. This large reduction in the rates of freight results from various causes; one is, the competition amongst British shipowners, and another the emancipation of the slaves, in consequence of which the quantity of sugar exported has been less. Another cause is the interference of American tonnage, to the exclusion of British vessels, which formerly were employed in conveying the bulky part of the provisions from Canada to the West Indies. Now that trade is almost exclusively confined to the United States ships. If the Navigation Laws were greatly relaxed or repealed, American shipping would displace British shipping in the West Indian carrying trade, provided the West Indies continued to grow sugar, which I think would be very questionable."

"The West Indies are altogether I may say in a chaos of ruin. The proprietors resident here, with all their means locked up in the West Indies, are in a pitiable condition indeed, with blighted prospects, without credit; and I believe that some of them here have not as much money as will pay their passage to the West Indies. I attribute this to the competition of the Brazils and Cuba, aided by the reduction of the differential duty on slave-grown sugar. The principal portion of Brazilian and Cuban sugar is brought to England in British ships, because the Navigation Laws restrict such importations either to those or ships of the country. Brazil having no ships, and Cuba a very inadequate supply, the carriage naturally falls into the hands of the British shipowner; therefore, the advantage of any reduction on the freight of British plantation sugar would be negatived by the foreign slave-labour sugar being brought at the same rate. As a merchant I am not aware of any practical inconvenience or injury resulting to my commercial operations from the Navigation Laws. I consider that, as a general principle, it is important to the consumer of articles, the produce of distant countries, that every reasonable encouragement should be afforded to the importation of those articles direct from the place of growth or production, and that no relaxation should take place without serious consideration by practical and impartial men. Every facility given for the

importation through indirect and foreign channels I should think would have a necessary tendency to discourage direct importation. Looking at our present position, with the finest colonial empire in the world, which has cost us something like £.800,000,000, I think, as prudent and wise men, we should endeavour to make the most of it. I consider that anything which would militate against our shipping interest would tell ultimately upon the manufacturer; and if the British merchant who imports cotton, and makes his calculation, were interfered with by France or any other nation, it would tend to make prices irregular, and prevent the uniform supply which we now have to depend upon. The first object the shipowner has in view is to place his ship in a remunerative trade; the next, the expenses likely to be incurred in working that ship; but the third and last consideration, by far the greatest of all, and which no arguments that I have ever heard could upset, is the high rate of taxes which the British shipowner must bear, compared with the American.

John Alexander Hankey, Esq., of the firm of Thomson, Hankey, and Co., London, stated:—

“ I am joint proprietor of estates in Grenada, and largely concerned, though not by name as proprietor, in Trinidad. I am also a merchant. I am not a general shipowner, but own four ships as a West Indian merchant. Our ships are the best that we can get. I think three were built in London, and one at Newcastle, by Messrs. Smiths, whose vessels are considered equal to those built in London. One of the London ships is a 13 A 1 ship. Our ships are from 300 to 400 tons. Generally speaking it is necessary in the conveyance of sugar to have ships of very good quality; it is a heavy cargo and very liable to damage. The rate of insurance is certainly less on the superior ships; at the same time I think that any ship which I proposed to the insurance offices would be taken at the same premium. There is a regular freight, which is rarely departed from; but whether we can make a profit or not depends upon the time occupied in the voyage.

“ With respect to the cost of a 13 years' ship, the ship of which I have the particulars in my hand was launched in August 1846, and is by new measurement 452 tons. Her name is the *Apolline*, built by Messrs. Curling and Young, of Limehouse. By old measurement she is 364 tons, by which the builders are paid. With everything complete, she cost £.8285; but in that I must state is included £.50 for the proportion of some small shallop in the West Indies. Therefore her real cost was £.8235 4s. 3d., or £.22 16s. 5d. per ton. When building

this ship I should not have had her so large but that I wished to make her very complete for any other trade. Her proportions are considered good, independent of our trade. Otherwise, in building a ship to go nowhere else but to the West Indies, we should care little about her sailing qualities, compared with taking a definite number of hogsheads beneath the beams. I think this paper includes every expense; it includes even the chronometer:—

“ *Cost of the Barque Apolline, built by Curling, Young, & Co., launched August 1846. Length, 106 $\frac{1}{10}$; breadth, 24 $\frac{8}{10}$; depth, 19 feet 2 inches; making, new measurement, 452 $\frac{7}{10}$. Old measurement, 110 feet length, 27 feet breadth, 19 feet 2 inches depth, 363 $\frac{7}{8}$.* ”

	£.	s.	d.
Building the ship	5760	10	6
Chronometer*	25	0	0
Pilotage*	5	8	0
Joiners' work, cabin fittings, hen-coops, &c.	57	17	6
Planks, capstan, bars, &c.	28	12	6
Masts	463	17	7
Four iron tanks, hearth, &c.	65	9	0
Patent wood oil	9	5	6
Main bilge, head pumps, &c., and painting	86	4	6
Casks, &c.	16	16	8
Smiths' work	73	11	0
Medicine chest, &c.	8	1	6
Sails, &c.	334	2	1
Cordage	810	3	11
Patent tiller slide	11	0	0
Lightning conductor	4	5	6
Boats	74	12	6
Metal sheathing	407	14	8
Setting up rigging	44	0	0
Binnacle, compasses, &c.*	23	4	9
Sundry charges,	14	3	0
Chain, anchors, chain cables	843	15	0
Lloyd's fee	4	0	0
“ survey while building	18	4	0
Bond	0	5	6
Deck crane	19	18	5
Bell	7	2	6
Galvanising iron work	17	18	2
Proportion of shallop	50	0	0
<hr/>			
	£.8285	4	3
Cost per ton, 452 new measurement	18	6	7
Do. 363 old do.	22	16	5

Having been requested to supply particulars of the expenses of the voyage to and from the West Indies, including

* The items marked with an asterisk are those referred to in the evidence of Mr. Minturn, to whom this paper was submitted by the Committee. See p. 157, *ante*.

the insurance, Mr. Hankey submitted the annexed tabular statement:—

“Caroline, launched 1841, A 1, 12 years, cost £.8300. Tonnage, 341; new measurement, 426. Crew, average 20. Disbursements for her first six voyages, exclusive of repairs and depreciation, her first copper being about worn out.

	1	2	3	4	5	6
Insured on ship .	£.8000	£.7000	£.6000	£.6000	£.6000	£.5000
Insured on boats, &c. in Jamaica }	800	900	300	300	300	300
	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.
Insurance . . .	310 4 0	272 14 0	235 4 0	241 19 0	232 1 0	195 5 0
Pilotage, &c. . .	157 8 2	154 8 1	174 14 7	167 4 2	174 6 2	171 6 8
Ballast . . . .	.....	17 10 0	12 9 0	11 0 0	5 3 4	17 15 0
Towing	27 0 0	1 1 0	5 5 0	10 0 0	2 0 0	3 0 0
Labour, &c. . .	386 2 8	260 12 1	458 6 8	315 1 2	415 16 1	332 17 0
Master	169 2 8	154 15 3	186 12 9	202 15 5	210 12 9	150 10 11
Dock charges . .	53 6 6	50 4 1	73 3 7	76 8 8	71 7 0	53 6 6
Victualling . . .	263 0 5	175 8 7	217 16 0	213 2 11	175 11 2	162 3 7
Medicine, &c. . .	9 12 0	7 12 8	8 7 6	11 9 8	8 5 11	9 9 8
Coals	4 10 10	5 11 10	6 13 0	4 15 0	5 11 2	6 0 0
Supplies for ship.	139 19 5	209 12 9	278 19 7	100 19 3	217 16 4	136 5 0
Charges in Jamaica	26 4 0	11 9 10	30 12 9	18 16 6	15 7 3	23 8 5
	£. 1840 5 8	1321 0 2	1688 4 5	1377 11 4	1533 18 2	1261 7 9
Articles signed .	27 Oct. 1841	16 May 1842	31 Dec. 1842	27 Dec. 1843	14 Oct. 1844	28 Apr. 1845
Seamen discharged	7 May, 1842	21 Sep. 1842	3 Sept. 1843	8 June, 1844	12 Apr. 1845	18 Sep. 1845

“ The first ships sail in October, and are ready to sail from Jamaica by February or March; from the smaller islands they are at least a month later. Those ships take out the stores, and they have to remain in the West Indies for a longer time than the others. The next ships sail in January, and are detained a very short time with us, as we have their cargo ready. In the event of the repeal of the Navigation Laws I do not think the American would be enabled to bespeak his cargo, so as not to be detained in the port long. I cannot say positively whether arrangements might not be made, but I think he would generally be in the same position with what are called seeking ships. I should rather expect to beat the American in that trade. I am not, however, sufficiently familiar with American shipping to express a decided opinion as to its remaining at the islands for freight. I do not think it would pay him. I am of opinion that the repeal of the Navigation Laws would be a very slight advantage indeed to the pro-

prietor. Competition might give lower freights. I think, however, we can sail ships as cheaply as the Americans can. If there was a reduction of freight upon competition it would be an advantage; but I doubt whether there would be. The cost of freight enters very slightly in reality into the value of sugar when brought to this country. In Grenada, where my own properties are, the freight is 4s. 3d. per cwt.; from that must be deducted the drogherage, which cannot be less, I think, than 9d. a cwt., which must be paid equally in all cases, whether British or foreign; that would leave 3s. 6d. for a cwt. of sugar. That only admits of such reduction upon 3s. 6d. as would amount to the difference between the expenses of the two ships. I think it a matter of doubt whether I could continue the good ships I now use at a lower price. I think I could not lower the rate of wages nor the mode of feeding the men. It costs us more than 1s. a day for the victualling of each man. The present rate of wages is 45s. for able seamen. The cost of producing a cwt. of sugar varies every year and with every estate. I think last year, without any profit whatever, or any charge for capital, it cost 17s. 1½d. per cwt. net, and the year before I think it was 24s. 9½d.; in 1845 it cost 26s. 8d. I am speaking of Grenada. If the freights fell I certainly should have to use inferior ships, because the insurance and depreciation on a ship of the costly description I have mentioned would absorb too large a proportion of the freight. I think that I could undoubtedly do it more cheaply by having inferior ships; but the sugar would be brought home in a very different manner. I think that I would not employ those expensive ships if I thought I should have a reduction of freight. I never found in the West Indies a want of tonnage at any time till last year, and that only for a short period. After the 1st of August the insurance is much higher. The repeal of the Navigation Laws would not affect the owner of the nine years' ship in the same degree that it would affect our 13 years' ship. The tendency would be to lower the standard of the ships; they would expend less money upon them. I think in certain of the West India colonies where there is great competition, that that has taken place already. The ships have been so much deteriorated in quality (I am speaking of Demerara and Trinidad) as to have given me some apprehension myself of a loss on my sugar from that cause. The freights were lowered, so that it no longer answered to send good ships. The next step from the reduction of freights would be to throw a number of good ships out of employment, which of course would be replaced by foreign ships or inferior British ones.

"Our seamen are employed in loading and unloading the ships abroad; they are employed also in the droghers which we have in the West Indies. The proportion of seamen to

100 tons varies a little. One ship is, I think, 320 tons, and carries 18 hands; the 400-ton ship 20 hands; it depends upon whether they have many to send away in their boats. The numbers I have given include apprentices. Our officers are a captain, and first and second mates. The captain has £.10 a month and a cabin allowance of £.65 for each voyage; he gets five per cent. primage on the freight out, which amounts, with a small primage on homeward freight, perhaps to £.35 a voyage; and anything he can make by his passengers, after deducting one-fifth paid to the ship. He has in addition a certain amount of freight allowed him for his own goods on the voyage out. He is not allowed freight coming home, unless he chooses to fill his cabin, which he may do. We engage the captains by the year; they generally remain in our service from the time they are quite young men till they retire. We generally take them as mates, and those that are steady and intelligent we are very glad to promote. The complaint that the masters of merchant ships are very inferior men both as to education and conduct does certainly not apply to the regular West Indiamen. They were always a respectable class of men, and I think they have improved in education. None of our ships are what are called temperance ships. I have employed American ships, and have sometimes had to complain of their captains. At the same time, from what experience I have, which is but little, I should say they were very much like ours; there is not much difference. We paid the same freight exactly that we should have paid in English ships. I own ships because as a West India merchant I can secure cargoes for them. It has been profitable to me; but I have not sufficient experience as a general shipowner to warrant me in expressing an opinion as to the profits of that business. If the West India business were as good as the ship-owning I should not complain. Upon the whole review of the case I confess I do not see that the repeal of the Navigation Laws would be of advantage to the West Indies. If it lowered freights it would be an injury to shipbuilding, if thereby English ships were replaced by foreign ships. I never heard of the impression that if the relaxation in the Navigation Laws took place the planters would get sugar sent home at a lower rate till the present representation from Jamaica, and I think that is only the effect of despair at the tremendous distress they now experience. I am an advocate for free trade myself in ship-owning as well as in everything else, but I doubt whether any material advantage to the West Indians can be expected from the repeal of the Navigation Laws. I do not see myself that the repeal of the Navigation Laws would be a considerable benefit to the general trade and commerce of the country; but I cannot say that it might not. I have never felt any inconvenience from the restrictions that I am aware of."

George Booker, Esq., a merchant of Liverpool and owner of estates in Demerara, stated :—

“ I have been resident in Demerara upwards of 20 years. Our supplies of provisions, stock, and other articles are procured from the United States, but estate supplies from England. Our importations from the United States are paid for in specie and dollars, or bank bills. Formerly we drew a principal portion of our provisions from British North America, for which we paid in the produce of the country. When the trade was opened with the United States it was supposed to be a privilege granted for the benefit of the West Indies; I think it was in 1832. I find that in the year 1830 there entered inwards, from the United Kingdom, 169 ships, 50,438 tons; British North American colonies, 319 ships, 31,632 tons; all foreign countries, 79 ships, 7170 tons; total, 558 ships, 89,240 tons. In the year 1845 the respective numbers appear as follow: from the United Kingdom, 200 ships, 58,273 tons; British North American colonies, 57 ships, 10,622 tons; United States, 141 ships, 20,862 tons; all other foreign countries, 73 ships, 4604 tons; total, 471 ships, 94,361 tons.

“ If foreign ships were permitted to import West Indian produce direct into the United Kingdom, I think the Americans might do so; but that punctuality with which planters now receive their supplies would be greatly injured by interference with the present system. The average expense of the drogherage of sugars, is, I should think, from 10s. to 12s. per hogshead. If the droghers had to convey the produce and reconvey supplies on different trips, I should think the expense would be nearly doubled. The rates of freight from Demerara, were, in 1844, 2s. 6d.; 1845, 2s. 8½d.; 1846, 2s. 4½d.; and 1847, 3s. 1d. I do not think that any permanent reduction of those rates of freight could be relied on as a consequence of the admission of foreign shipping to the colonial carrying trade. If the produce were brought home freight free I do not think it would give us relief to the extent we require. I think the repeal of the Navigation Laws would upset the system that exists at present, against which I have not heard any complaints; and I do not think we have any reason to complain of them. I consider the charges for freight, both out and home, have been reasonable, and that the work has been performed with expedition.”

Great part of Mr. Booker's evidence consisted of a repetition of that given by the gentleman who preceded him; and it is, therefore, unnecessary to state it at any greater length. The feeling of the merchants, shipowners, pro-

prietors, and planters of the West Indies upon this question appears perfectly unanimous.

Robert Brooks, Esq., a merchant in the Australian trade, principally engaged in trade with Sydney and Port Phillip, stated :—

“ During my transactions I have not experienced the slightest injury or inconvenience from the practical application of the Navigation Laws. I have been engaged in the Australian trade 24 years. The tonnage is supplied by ships taking out cargoes from this country, and by convict ships or emigrant ships. I have not, at any one period in the course of my experience, known any difficulty to arise from the inadequate supply of tonnage. The rates of freight have varied, but they have been reasonable. I am a shipowner as well as a merchant. The bulk of produce being wool, the rates of freight have varied from 1½d. downwards to 1d. a pound. I have known it to be three farthings, but only in one instance; that is, from £13 down to £8 per ton. We rely on finding tonnage abroad. In one year two or three ships were chartered; but that is the only exception within the last 20 years. It is advantageous to me as a merchant to find a regular supply of tonnage abroad; but if the Navigation Laws were repealed, and the freights thereby reduced, I should be inclined to think there would be at times a great influx, and at others a scarcity. Ships would be less inclined to go from this country on the chance of getting freights. I know ships that go out at a very moderate freight, depending for remuneration from the freight home; but they do not go out in ballast. The expenses attendant on the shipment of a cargo of wool consist in screwing and stowing. Last year, and for the last four or five years, the cost was about 3s. 6d. per bale, which would be about 15s. or 16s. per ton registered tonnage. Those charges fall on the ship, not on the shipper. In the event of the repeal of the Navigation Laws I do not suppose there would be any reduction of freight. I think it would vary considerably more than it does now, arising from the circumstance of there being occasionally an influx and at other times a scarcity of shipping. I do not know of any inconvenience whatever in the colonial trade arising from the laws. I never heard of any dissatisfaction or complaint having been expressed in the colonies. I should not, as a merchant, be benefited by a repeal. There are not many foreign vessels that visit Australia. I only know two instances where the produce (wheat) has been taken to

other countries. My business is principally with Sydney and Port Philip; Adelaide is the copper port. I have read Mr. Browning's first day's evidence before the House of Commons; not all. I never knew wool lie in any port or ports of Australia for want of tonnage. I know it has been said that large quantities of ore have been lying for want of a ship; but I do not believe it to be the fact, as shipping might have been very easily obtained from the neighbouring ports or from Sydney.

"There is a considerable trade from Sydney to the Indian ports, more particularly with China and Manilla. My ships frequently go to Manilla and China from Australia when freights are below a certain rate, and have carried tea and sugar to Australia, and to this country also. The amount of the freight on wool is so very trifling that it does not affect the manufacturer. The amount he has to pay in the first instance affects the profit he derives, supposing the price of the commodity to continue the same; but the freight on manufactures outwards is very trifling, and a low rate of freight from this country is, no doubt, an advantage to the manufacturer who exports his goods. Copper ore forms about the best ballast for ships that come home with wool. As a shipowner, I would rather bring copper ore home for nothing, when a ship loads wool, as it takes less room than ballast. The principal shipping ports for wool are Sydney and Port Philip. Colonial shipping has increased during the last two years; but they do not build any large ships. For £.9 a ton I think they would build small-sized vessels, but not including copper, ready for sea. They are principally confined to the local trade. One ship has come over here, and there are two others I believe coming, of from 400 to 500 tons. They are built principally of blue gum or stringy bark. They do not grow their own hemp in the colony, and the fittings of the ships are principally sent from England. The cost in England of building ships in my trade is about £.13 a ton, including spars and rigging, but not copper and fittings. Ships go from Bremen to South Australia with emigrants; those ships are not allowed to take back in return wool or copper ore to this country. We have only one or two instances in which wool has gone in an American ship to the United States; but that eventually came to this country. The objection, I believe, was to the want of sale in the United States. I do not suppose that wool could with advantage be sent from the colonies through the United States; that was a mere accidental circumstance. I know no instance of Bremen ships having taken ore to Bremen; the ships I allude to have gone to India. I do not know that the Navigation Laws offer any impediments to the trader, at least not in my trade. If copper ore cannot be had to bring home with wool, the ships ballast with tallow, oil, or hides, and it

would be an advantage to go to any place where we could get the highest price for our oil."

John Gore, Esq. a member of the firm of John Gore and Company, stated :—

" I am a merchant. Our mercantile transactions are principally carried on with New South Wales, in which we are extensively engaged, and have been since 1825 and 1826. I have a small share in four or five ships. In my commercial transactions I am not aware that I have experienced any injury or inconvenience from the operation of the Navigation Laws. The supply of shipping in the ports with which we are engaged has always been sufficient. Our general rates of freight for wool have been from 1*d.*, or thereabouts, to 1*1/2d.*, generally about 1*1/2d.* I have known them under a 1*d.*, but not often. I should say 1*1/2d.* freight. We never yet chartered vessels, being always sure of a regular supply. We never had a bale of wool remain at any of our ports that I know of because we had not a ship to bring it home. I know nothing of the Navigation Laws; I never heard of them till lately. They never interfered with me, to my knowledge. I know a little about the lead trade. I have got some lead coming home at £2 10*s.* a ton from a mine we have about 12 miles from Adelaide. It is very fine lead, and we are going to smelt it. It is laid down here at £8 per ton. We have had home very little yet, perhaps 100 tons or so. It has only just begun."

Being asked—

" Do you know a gentleman named Browning, a merchant?"

He replied—

" I know a Browning in the spirit trade. I do not think there is a merchant named Browning* in the Australian trade. He may be in the South Adelaide trade, as we have very little to do with that. I know the firm of Boyd Brothers and Company, but I do not know Mr. Browning. The name is not in the firm."

* Mr. Samuel Browning gave evidence before the Committee of the House of Commons upon the Australian trade.

Frederick Parbury, Esq., of the firm of Lamb, Parbury, and Co., a merchant engaged in the Australian trade, stated:—

“ I resided for a considerable period at Sydney. Our firm has been in the habit of chartering and employing shipping for the conveyance of produce very frequently. I am not a ship-owner at present; I have been. I have never experienced any inconvenience from the Navigation Laws as regards the conveyance of produce from one place in New South Wales to another, but as owners of whaling ships we have at times experienced inconvenience from being obliged to take so large a proportion of British seamen, when we might have got foreigners better adapted for that purpose. The whaling ships out of the colony generally are between 250 and 400 tons register. For a vessel of about 350 or 400 tons we require about 32 hands, including officers. We sometimes get Norwegians, Danes, or Americans, or South Sea Islanders, who are better adapted for whaling purposes. There are about 20 ships engaged in this trade; formerly more. Latterly the number has fallen off, because, as far as my own experience goes, they cannot be sailed to advantage. The Americans are beating us out of the trade, I think. I believe the reason of that to be the cost of their ships, which is originally much less than ours, and they most probably provision them at a cheaper rate. I also think the men generally are under better management, and more successful than our seamen at the colony. We are generally obliged to depend on the refuse of merchant ships, and cannot get sober men. I should not like to be brought into direct competition with Americans in other trades, if I were a shipowner. The Americans have an advantage over us in the whaling trade, because the men get a smaller share of oil than the British seamen. Where British seamen would get a 90th part, American would get the 130th perhaps. We could get men at Sydney at a much lower rate than the Americans, and, I think, equally good whalers. There are a number of South Sea Islanders ready to go on this voyage. We can take New Zealanders, now they are British seamen, who are very good fishermen. Our victualling, on the average of years, is much more expensive than that of the Americans. New Zealanders being now British seamen, the objection I have urged is in some degree taken away. The Americans sometimes send oil here under the existing duty. The Americans having power by law to bring the produce of this fishery direct to England, they will no doubt do so, and that is the reason our ships in the trade have lately fallen off. We are afraid of the time approaching when American oil will be admitted at the same rate as English, a law to which effect comes into force on the 1st January, 1849.

I, as an owner of whaling ships, sold them, not choosing to compete with the Americans. I think the Americans, in consequence of sailing on temperance principles alone, will beat us, as we are obliged to give our seamen grog. We tried the temperance plan in one of our ships, but the voyage failed from a mutiny of the crew after they had been out a few months. The captains of late years out of the colony have been less successful than formerly, yet I think we have found them improved ; we have been more particular in their selection. But we have a great difficulty in getting men to command whalers, as it is not every man who is fitted for it. The mates have also improved ; but not the seamen. We have a greater difficulty in getting good seamen than we had a few years ago. Norwegian seamen are generally better behaved. The drunkenness alluded to is worse on shore, no doubt ; but on board ship frequently. I would not on any account own a whaling vessel after the Act of Parliament comes in force for the free admission of foreign oil.

“ We always have had an ample supply of tonnage to carry on the wool trade. Ships constantly leave the Australian ports seeking cargoes. French and American ships frequently bring the produce of their own country to Australia, but rarely take back wool ; they generally go to Manilla or China, and from thence to America. They take English bank or Treasury bills from Sydney in return for the cargoes they bring. I recollect one American ship taking wool from Sydney. Two or three French ships have also taken portions of cargoes. Supposing American ships brought tea from China, they would take money. The consumption of tea is very large indeed ; but the Navigation Laws prevent its being carried on by American vessels. Tea from China can only be imported in British or Chinese vessels. There is an enormous consumption of tea in Australia, probably more than in any other part of the world. I estimate it at 8 lbs. to 9 lbs. per head per annum, men, women, and children ; common congou and hyson skin is retailed at 1s. 2d. to 1s. 6d. per lb. A chest of hyson skin sells in Sydney at about £.3 10s., and the cost of freight would be about 7s. or 8s. for bringing it from China. The ships that carry tea formerly took only Treasury and bank bills to buy it with, but latterly there has been a good deal of traffic in sandal-wood, which is collected at some islands in the South Seas and brought to Sydney. It is put into vessels that go to China and sold there, and forms a part of their means of getting a return cargo. Dutchmen used to come from Batavia ; latterly they have not been admitted. As far as I can understand from some retaliatory law, they cannot import sugar to New South Wales, although it is the produce of Java. I am not aware that there is a strong opinion in Australia in opposition to the Navigation Laws. I left the colony in March 1847.”

Hugh Hunter, Esq., senior partner of the house of Hunter, Arbuthnot, and Co., in the Mauritius, stated:—

“ I am a merchant resident at the Mauritius; I am also a landed proprietor in the Colony. I am unaware that it is supposed in the Mauritius that a boon is about to be given to that colony by the abrogation of the Navigation Laws. When I left the island in December 1845, nothing of the kind was imagined. I find it has been put forward here as one of the measures of relief proposed to be given, but it will give no relief whatever in my opinion. I have been a shipper of sugar from the Mauritius to Great Britain since 1829. I have paid freight from 25s. to £.5, but the £.5 was only once during 19 years. We have had an abundant supply of shipping, in proof of which I have paid 25s., £.3, £.3 10s., and £.4; but the average has not exceeded £.3 15s. This year I find by letters from the island that we are paying £.5 7s. 6d., the reason of which is that the whole shipping of England apparently has been employed in bringing corn to this country. I can go into the market and charter a ship to the foreign islands in the West Indies at from £2 10s. to £.3; to Brazil about £.3. The average period of the voyage from Porto Rico and from Cuba I should give at 100 to 110 days, including 25 or 30 days in port; from the Mauritius it is 90 days out and an average of 30 days in port, and I suppose about 100 days home—220 days. If the Navigation Laws were repealed and I was at liberty to charter what ship I liked, the shipowner would, I presume, tell me he could get £.2 10s. or £.3 for a short voyage of 110 days, and that as to go to the Mauritius would occupy nearly double the time it must be in a proportionate ratio more; therefore, as it would be very likely £.2 15s. for 110 days, for the other 100 days I should be charged from 50 to 75 per cent. additional, which would bring it to nearly £.5. The great fear in the Mauritius is, that of not having tonnage. Our sugars come into town in the month of September, and we ought always to ship them as soon as they arrive. It is not like the West Indies, where the ship lies for three or four months droghering along the coast of Jamaica, but our sugars are all shipped from the wharf, at Port Louis. I load a ship generally once a week. We now get ships from New South Wales, if they do not choose to accept the freights there. We get them from the Cape, and also ships from India, which bring down rice principally from Calcutta; and I have these last two years sent from England about half the number that I should require during the season: so that we should not be at all stopped in despatching our crop. This year I have sent out nine vessels. I chartered them for the voyage home. They take their own run out either from Bordeaux or Marseilles, where they get wine for the island, and on arrival at the

Mauritius they are at my disposal. I do not say we should be worse off by having the chance of foreign ships as well as of British, except in this, that I consider we have been well served, and I have an experience before me of 19 years. Now the other is prospective, and I am not sure of being better served. I am satisfied with the freights which I have paid as being moderate. If English ships found their trade interfered with in the Mauritius, I should be less confident of having my supply of vessels. English ships being quite sure of cargoes there, without competition, go with more certainty. Between September and April they are generally sure of cargoes. I have no dread upon the matter. It is not for me to say anything on the one side or the other ; only I say that to me, as a planter in the island, it would be no advantage. It would not enable me to raise my sugar one penny a cwt. cheaper than I do at present. The Dutch do not trade with us. They come in by sufferance, in the event of meeting with damage in their voyage home from Java. Two or three American ships annually arrive at the Mauritius. They bring timber and provisions, in payment for which they take money, but not cargo. It is merely a part of their outward voyage ; they go on either to India, China, or Java. The trade of the Mauritius is confined to the export of sugar to this country, except a small portion which goes to the Eastern colonies, New South Wales, and the Cape. The cost of production of a ton of sugar, ready for shipment, I am sorry to say is about £.18, and the average freight has been about £.3 15s. to £.4. The repeal of the Navigation Laws might reduce freights 10s. or it might be £.1 ; but I do not think shipowners would be likely to accept £.2 10s. or £.3 at the Mauritius without going farther to search for a freight if the whole trade were opened to all foreigners. It might possibly reduce the value of sugar 1s. a cwt. I think that is the extent, which would be about *half a farthing per pound*. If it reduced the value of sugar at that rate I should suppose the consumer would get a part, certainly not all, the benefit. If the supply were small it would be no matter what the price of the freight had been. You do not sell on a per-centge on the invoice, you sell according to the demand and the market price.

“ For 19 years under the present system I have been perfectly satisfied, and do not see the advantage of any change in the Navigation Laws. It is a prospective matter, which I should be very sorry to count upon.”

Charles Enderby, Esq., belonging to the firm of Charles, Henry, and George Enderby, stated :—

“ I am a general merchant. I have been concerned a good deal in the whaling trade. My father established that fishery. I am a very small shipowner. There are only 21 ships in the Southern whale fishery now, and 40 in the Northern. In the Southern fisheries the ships average about 30 men a ship, and in the Northern fishery about from 45 to 50 per ship—about 2600 in all. In the year 1821 in the Southern fisheries there were 164, and in the Northern 158 ships. At that time Mr. Huskisson took away the bounties which had been previously given to ships engaged in that fishery ; he repealed the prohibitions which prevented the colonists from carrying on the fisheries, and took off the duties from vegetable oils. By the Returns up to the 22nd of February the number of American ships employed in the whale fisheries was 660 ; there are 659 to the Southern fishery, and one ship in the Northern. They have been extremely successful in this one ship ; she was more successful than any of our British ships last year. In 1821 the total number of American ships employed in the whale fisheries did not amount to 130. The Americans have completely beaten us in that branch of trade. Their ships were fitted at considerably less cost, particularly previous to the year 1842, while we were subject to high duties upon all our stores and provisions. The Americans had likewise a considerable protecting duty upon vegetable and other oils. We have a protection of £.15 per ton upon spermaceti oil until the 1st of January, 1849 ; after that period there is to be no duty. I attribute the decline of the British fisheries to legislative interference, which has tended to unsettle the minds of our shipowners, and to destroy the trade. When Mr. Huskisson repealed the duties upon vegetable oils it occasioned a depression in the price of fish oil. A few years afterwards, in 1825, a boon was given to the North American colonies. It was enacted, that ‘ Any sort of craft, food, and victuals, except spirits, and any sort of clothing and implements or materials fit and necessary for the British fisheries in America, might be imported into the place at or from whence such fishery is carried on in British ships duty free.’ Upon the passing of this Act there was no reason why our North American colonists should not be able to carry on their fishery on as good terms as the United States of America ; and it greatly discouraged the shipowners of this country, who considered it a hardship not to be allowed the same privileges. No shipowner was disposed to build new ships in England. The Australian colonies were near the fisheries ; but the same privileges were not granted to the Australian colonies, consequently they suffered a like injustice with the mother-country,

Notwithstanding the remonstrances which I made on numerous occasions to the Government, no attention was paid to them until the year 1832, when Mr. Poulett Thompson introduced 'An Act to amend the Laws relating to the Customs.' The Bill thus entitled was brought in for the purpose of relieving the ships in the fishery from the disadvantages under which they were labouring; but upon its being known that large quantities of Hamburgh provisions and other stores were being imported into the country, there were remonstrances on the part of the Irish Members, and the Act was suspended and never came into operation. Therefore, until the year 1842, no relief of any sort or description was afforded to the English shipowners connected with the fishery. This restriction was removed in 1842. From that time we have had some provisions and stores cheaper, others dearer.

" I have a statement of an American vessel of 400 tons, a new vessel, and she is stated to have cost 40,000 dollars; that would be under £.9000*, equal to A 1. A vessel which sailed a little before cost us close upon £.12,000. Our ship was built at Cowes, by White; she is also 400 tons. If the Navigation Laws were repealed, and we were permitted to employ foreign ships, stores, and seamen, the owners of the whale fisheries would certainly, I should say, avail themselves of the privilege; but the measure would assuredly not increase the number of British ships in the fishery. The fishery could be carried on from the colonies with much greater advantage than from the mother-country. I do not conceive that anything could possibly now restore the fishery to Great Britain. If the Navigation Laws were repealed, it would probably be for our interest to build, equip, and man our ships in Norway. We have that subject under consideration. We had a proposition made to us some six months ago, and we think it would be greatly to our advantage to embrace it. If we had entirely a Norwegian crew we consider we could pay and victual them for much less than we could a British crew. We cannot pay a mixed crew differently; but it follows, of course, that we should displace a British ship and a British crew by taking that step, and that we should also throw out of employment a portion of artisans in England. If the law permitted we should take a greater number of foreigners, and diminish the number of British seamen which we are now obliged to carry. I have always understood that the class of men employed on the whale fisheries have been a great advantage to the navy; and, of course, if we employed foreign seamen instead, it would be a loss to the maritime state of the country. I consider the British seamen quite as good as the American seamen; and I

* The cost of an American vessel is given upon very excellent authority in the evidence of R. B. Minturn, Esq., at p. 156, *ante*.

think the evidence which we have had shows that the ships have been as successful in prosecuting their voyages, and have obtained as much oil in as short a period. I do not think the moral character of the British seaman stands very high; but that in some measure depends upon the character of the master. We have been fortunate with masters of that description. We have given our seamen better shares than other owners have, and perhaps on that account have been more successful in fishing than other owners. If British seamen had foreign seamen coming in competition with them perhaps it might induce some of them to be a little more sober. With my view of the case, I would employ Norwegian ships in my fishery. The fittings, with the exception perhaps of chain cables and one or two things, would be entirely Norwegian; and, as a matter of course, it would tend in the direction of damage to the revenue, and would inflict injury on our private dockyards to that extent. This I should naturally do in pursuing my own interest. I believe that the Norwegians get their copper and iron in this country, but I was not aware that they did their sails, because the Russian sailcloth I should have thought could have been procured cheaper. If I thought that the Navigation Laws were likely to be repealed I should certainly suspend my operations until I could get some information to ascertain where I could fit my ships cheapest. If I could save £.500 or £.1000 a ship upon 20 or 30 ships, it would be an object worth effecting. With all these advantages I have not a shadow of doubt of being able to beat the Americans. The oil which they obtain is exported to the Continent, and in vast quantities to this country. We might employ 500 vessels upon British capital which are now employed upon American capital. That would also employ a greater number of merchant vessels to bring the increased quantity of oil home; but not nearly in the proportion of whaling ships that we should employ, because one merchant ship would bring the cargo of three or four whaling ships, and with a diminished crew. A merchant ship does not carry one-half of the crew that a whaling ship carries. There is a great want of a better system of maritime discipline on board our mercantile navy. We have no control whatever over our seamen. A new code of laws for that purpose is very much desired.

"I am a general merchant, but am not engaged in the West India trade at all. I should imagine that if foreign ships were suffered to bring sugar from the West Indies they would carry out lumber or other articles for sale from their own States, and would deprive this country of the sale of a certain portion of goods which are now sent out. If the trade were free the effect would be very much to reduce freights, by their getting a freight outward and homeward. Competition would reduce the price of labour; but I think we have sufficient

evidence before us, in other cases, of the evils arising from what we call over-production; and in the case of ships from this country, whether to carry coals to, or bring sugars from, the West Indies, any excessive amount of tonnage must operate seriously to prejudice the men engaged in that trade—not the English alone, but foreigners likewise. I imagine you cannot reduce prices without reducing the value of labour, and that, I think, has been one great cause of the distress abroad as well as at home. The value of the imports of oil into the United States, in 1847, exceeded £2,000,000 sterling from their fisheries."

A great part of Mr. Enderby's evidence had reference to a very laudable scheme for establishing a fishing station at the Auckland Islands, and which, it is to be hoped, will fully meet the sanguine expectations of the spirited designer. As, however, it is a matter unconnected with the Navigation Laws, except inasmuch as Mr. Enderby's plan relates to the question of shipbuilding in foreign countries and the employment of foreign seamen, I have not thought it necessary to include it in the foregoing condensed statement of that gentleman's evidence.

Thomas Augustus Gibb, Esq., of the firm of Gibb, Livingstone, and Co., stated:—

" I resided for some years as a merchant and agent at Canton, Hong Kong, and Shang-hai. The principal articles of export from China are tea and raw silk, which are chiefly exported to Great Britain. In the coasting trade of China we employ small American ships as well as English, but to England only British ships. The rates of freight from China to Great Britain for some years past have been £4 10s. to £5 10s. per ton, which I consider moderate. The supply of tonnage has been quite equal to the demands of trade. I should employ American in preference to British ships. We have a number of American schooners that do their work better on the coast of China than the generality of our vessels. Americans are not hampered by so many forms as the British. An American vessel can get facilities that we cannot. We have a variety of detail to go through in entering our vessels, owing to our Consular arrangements. These Consular regu-

lations were made with a view to carry out the treaty concluded by Sir Henry Pottinger. It is an endeavour to protect the Chinese revenue; and in the endeavour to protect that we are subjected to vexatious delays. They are regulations of a trifling nature, simply causing delay. In the Consular office at Shang-hai, the hours are from ten o'clock in the morning till four in the afternoon; so that if a British vessel arrives after four o'clock in the afternoon I cannot report the vessel that day; but if it is an American, I can go to the American Consul at any hour up to eight or nine and report her, and I can have boats alongside the next morning at daylight. The Shang-hai river is narrow, and it requires perhaps a day or two to drop down; and if we do not take advantage of every tide there is a very serious delay. I am speaking of two years ago; I do not know whether there has been any alteration since. I would only prefer American or any other foreign ships because I think I should save in time by it; there is no other reason; that is, provided I could get foreign ships on the same terms, but I do not think I could. I think I might get a Bremen vessel on the same terms. But the American ships in China are a very superior class of vessels; I think they sail quite as expensively as our own. The American vessels do not come to China fully laden. The freight homeward must pay them. They are generally owned by merchants in China or the United States. They bring out British credits and a few of their own coarse cotton domestics; sometimes a few dollars and a little cochineal. They occasionally load from Liverpool, and leave with teas and manufactured silk. If American vessels were entitled to trade between this country and China, and to bring their cargoes here direct, I have very little doubt they would enter largely into the China trade, and I think they would have a considerable proportion of the carrying trade. We have a large import of British piece goods into China. I should estimate the value, upon a rough guess, at one-fourth of the whole trade; but that would hardly include raw cotton from India. The first effect of competition might be a reduction of freight, because I have no doubt that a large glut of American ships would be sent to China under the idea of participating in the carrying trade; the consequence would be a general over-trading. I have seen freights as low as £3 a ton; but that would not continue. I do not think less than £4 or £4 10s. per ton could pay any shipowner. Since 1834 the freights have been as low as it is possible for them to be to allow the shipowner to get interest for his money. Under the existing system we frequently have a glut of ships; and at this moment in China we have ships that we cannot load, and which we are sending to other ports. It is not that there is not tea sufficient to be sent home; I believe the Chinese could supply us with an unlimited quantity if we gave them two years' notice. We

have much trouble with English crews; there are constant complaints of insubordination. I should be sorry to employ more foreigners; I prefer Lascars in India to a British crew, but I do not think it would answer to bring the natives to this country. We also prefer Danes, Swedes, &c., if we can get them; they are quiet well-behaved men on board ship. If the Act which prevents Lascars from being recognised as British seamen were repealed, I should not* employ them largely as a portion of our crews. Lascars, if it is very bad weather off the Cape and very cold, become almost useless, and if they arrive in England in winter they suffer dreadfully. They are generally hired in gangs under a serang, to whom we pay a certain sum, which he portions out. They receive their orders through him; they would not be able to take their orders from English officers. I could bring home a ship manned entirely with Chinese. They are good sailors and temperate men. If Lascars were considered as British seamen I believe many masters would run the risk of bringing a Lascar crew home, though it would add to their expense undoubtedly if they were obliged to provide for the men while in this country, and to send them back again.

"As a merchant I have never found any inconvenience from the restrictions imposed by the Navigation Laws. I do not anticipate that I should ship my teas cheaper if they were abolished. The price of tea in China is regulated generally by the price in this country. We have had several cargoes of Chinese sugar; some have paid; but we are depressed now with sugar as much as with the tea, or more so."

William Scott, Esq., a merchant of China, stated:—

"I have resided in China since 1835 until within the last two years; for three years at Canton; afterwards at Macao and at Hong Kong. During the existence of the Chamber of Commerce at Canton I was secretary to it. I had a good deal to do with shipping, and I am generally acquainted with the particular interests of China. The trade of conveying tea to this country is carried on by those ships that load in this country with British manufactures and proceed direct to China; there are also ships that load in this country for ports in India and afterwards go on to China, and others that go to Australia with passengers and convicts, which subsequently arrive in China in ballast. These usually afford a sufficient quantity of tonnage to meet our requirements; but if there is anything

short we have the country ships when there is any unusual demand. The average rate of freight in the direct imports from China to Great Britain is about £.5 a ton. I have known it as low as £.3, and as high as £.12; at the time the greater number of the ships left Canton 12 guineas per ton was paid for all the unoccupied tonnage; that was when Captain Elliott ordered British subjects to leave. It was from accidental circumstances; freights are seldom higher than £.5. In 1846 £.8 was paid; but, generally speaking, we have an abundance of shipping in China. I have never known the supply of tonnage in China insufficient for the trade. I have never, that I am aware of, felt any inconvenience from the operation of the Navigation Laws. At present a foreign ship cannot bring tea to England; and I cannot see that they could do it at all cheaper than an English ship. The Americans have not goods to load with to China, and many of their vessels arrive in ballast; whereas our ships have a freight either the whole or part of the way out, so that under any circumstances I should say that they would be able to carry as low as the ships of any other country. Foreign ships have rather an advantage over British; and it would often suit an English merchant to send his goods by foreign ships in consequence of their being free from our Consular regulations*.

“With reference to the case of the *Earl of Balcarres*, I recollect that on one occasion she came here with another Bombay vessel; the other vessel was sold, and the Government allowed her to take out the two crews without any English seamen at all. It was done by a petition to the Treasury, I believe†. If Lascars were considered British seamen it would save some expense when it was necessary to send country ships to England; but I do not think they would resort to the practice generally.

“Very few British ships clear out for Hamburg from Canton. The Hamburg vessels generally go to Manilla to fill up. When I was secretary to the Chamber of Commerce there were three French vessels that came to Canton, but I do not think there was half a cargo of tea taken by the three. The French get their tea from this country; and the supply of the North of Europe is generally brought to England by British ships. A considerable quantity of tea, I believe, goes to Russia overland. Between Australia and China there is a small trade carried on. Vessels come from Australia and make up a cargo between Manilla and China. Sometimes a vessel is chartered the whole way to Sydney. They send perhaps two or three small vessels in the course of the year. I expect they are generally chartered at so much for the voyage, but I think four guineas a ton has been paid from Canton to Sydney.”

* See evidence of Mr. Gibb, p. 218, *ante*.

+ See p. 133, *ante*.

James Dowie, Esq., a Canada merchant, of the firm of Gould, Dowie, and Moore, stated :—

“ I have seen the Parliamentary Paper, No. 70, containing ‘ Copies or extracts of correspondence between the Secretary of State and the Governors of the several colonies respecting the operation of the British Navigation Laws.’ It contains despatches from the Governors of Canada enclosing representations from the Boards of Trade at Montreal, Toronto, and Hamilton. They ask, first, for the repeal of the discriminating duties; secondly, a freer navigation to the Americans on the St. Lawrence, as regards inland navigation; and, thirdly, free navigation to and from the sea to the ships of all foreign nations. Those appeals were made between May 1846 and July 1847. The first request has been granted; and the second, that of freer navigation on the St. Lawrence, as regards inland navigation, has been granted in part, without any Act either of the Imperial Parliament or the Colonial Parliament. The Government of Canada has been empowered to grant permission to American vessels to enter and pass down the St. Lawrence and go up another river into the American States, and to return in the same way. I believe that what has been thus granted could have been done without any permission from this country, for an equal privilege had been already granted in the upper waters of Canada. I have been a merchant in the Canadas 31 years. I am a shipowner in a small way, but very largely engaged in the Canada trade. We charter from 60 to 70 vessels annually from British North America to the United Kingdom. Their cargoes are chiefly deals and timber. The tonnage engaged in the Canada trade last year was 1413 vessels, of about 538,000 tons, including Quebec and Montreal, and the repeated voyages. Sometimes ships make two voyages in the year, others only one. That tonnage is chiefly supplied by chartering ships in the United Kingdom. We never found any difficulty in chartering ships to supply our wants till 1847; we found some that year, owing to the demand for ships to convey corn to England. The ships we charter principally go out in ballast. The rate of freight from Montreal to England is about 4s. 6d. upon a barrel of flour; there are about eight barrels to a measurement ton. The expenses of navigation between Quebec and Montreal are heavy, and I think they might be reduced. They amount, with pilotage, upon a vessel of 400 tons, to about £110 sterling, up and down, which is at least 10 per cent. upon the freight.

“ A few Bremen and Hamburg ships visited Canada last year, but I believe not more than a dozen Americans. The Hamburg and Bremen ships brought German emigrants. I doubt whether foreign or any other vessels would be induced to go there in any numbers without charters, because they are

cut out from all the other ports of America when they enter the St. Lawrence; and just in proportion as they ascend the river to Montreal their expenses increase, and the number of places of loading decrease. The usual rate of freight from New York to England on a barrel of flour, previously to 1847, was from 1s. 6d. to 2s. 6d. a barrel by the packet ships. In that year the demand for shipping was such that the rates at New York rose to the level of Quebec rates. They have since fallen considerably. This year we have freights at an unusually low rate in the timber trade, and consequently in the trade for flour and wheat. The rates paid at New York prior to 1847 were under the old Corn Law; and the packet ships to Liverpool and London generally supplied more than sufficient tonnage for the shipments. Those packets sail to their day, and their freight home to this country is less an object to them than the freight to New York; therefore, if they cannot get one rate of freight they take another. Under the law which will take effect in February 1849 it is expected that tonnage will be wanted at New York beyond the supply of the liners, and then the rates will assimilate very closely to the Quebec rates. The average freight for lumber has been 38s. to 39s. a load from Quebec; but I am sorry, as a shipowner, to say that at present it is much lower. The average freight of a load of timber from New Brunswick would be about 3s. to 4s. less.

"I am aware that the Canadians have petitioned Her Majesty to allow American vessels to descend the St. Lawrence to sea, and all foreign vessels to ascend to Montreal. The Quebec Board of Trade has also petitioned, but not for that; on the contrary, I hold in my hand a Report of the Board of Trade of Quebec, which I have no doubt is at the Colonial Office, although it is not an official document. The date is April 1847. Part of it runs thus:—'Your Council are decidedly of opinion that encouragement and protection should be afforded the British and colonial shipping over foreign. A matter concerning us as closely is the free navigation of the St. Lawrence; and on this your Council are at no loss to express their opinion, which is, that it is to be hoped the British Government will never allow the subject to be discussed with the Government of the United States.' The Report goes on:—'In the same way as the American Government are endeavouring to secure our trade through their territory by means of the Drawback Bill, let us exert ourselves in endeavouring to secure the transport of the produce of the Western States by removing all restrictions from American shipping navigating our noble river, and by reducing the rates now chargeable on all vessels passing through our different canals.' They are willing to let American vessels come down as far as Montreal and to trade generally in the inland waters, but not to go to the sea, as that certainly would reduce the employment of British and colonial ships,

and I do not think it would increase the trade of Canada. When the new Corn Law comes into operation it will be about 1s. per quarter cheaper to export corn to New York from Hamilton than by the St. Lawrence and Quebec, inasmuch as the charges of navigation of the upper part of the St. Lawrence to sea and insurance will be saved. That may be partly met by reducing the towage, lighterage, and pilotage, but the insurance must remain the same. Tea and colonial produce were furnished to the upper parts of Canada by that route in a small degree formerly, but it will be done now in a greater degree. I can scarcely account in any other way for the very small cargoes which the London traders are taking out to Montreal; cargoes so small that we have not known the like since we have been in the trade. The extra 1s. will have the effect of transferring the trade to New York and to Portland, when the railroad is opened; but New York is the emporium, and is likely to continue to be, of the United States. It is also likely to be the emporium of Upper Canada under this repeal of the discriminating duties; and that is the remedy which the free-traders of Montreal have for themselves without seeking to open the River St. Lawrence to foreign ships of all nations, thinking they would get a benefit from it. I think they have got the benefit in another way, in the repeal of the discriminating duties, which allows foreign and British plantation sugar and other goods to come in at the same duty by inland navigation from the States. The Legislature of Canada have recently adopted a new tariff, which has been approved by Her Majesty in council. It came into operation January 5th, 1848. One effect of the new tariff is, that it bars American wheat and flour to the extent of 3s. currency per barrel of flour, and the same per quarter of wheat; whereas, on their own principles, I think they should allow them to come in; and, looking at the price of flour in the higher parts of Canada, the duty of 3s. a barrel is very high.

"We employ chiefly British-built ships. The number of charters that we make is so large that we seek our tonnage in this country. I think the St. John's New Brunswick vessels will bear some comparison with American. They enter largely into competition with them in the freight of cotton in the Southern States. I do not know what we should do without them. The colonial are not beating the English ships out of the timber trade, it is so large, and must be while the wants of the country are so great. From the St. Lawrence alone we have ships making 1400 voyages annually. The Canadians have the means of getting sugar from Cuba or Brazil, *via* New York, under the repeal of the discriminating duties. If that route is generally adopted, it will without doubt diminish the amount of shipping on the St. Lawrence. At the time the Memorial of the Canadian Assembly was agreed to, they could not have

been aware of the repeal of the discriminating duties, for the Act did not receive the Royal assent till three or four weeks ago. There is no doubt they had permission to do it, which is nearly the same thing, but I do not think they had the whole sufficiently in mind."

Robert Gillespie, Esq., a general merchant, chiefly connected with the trade of Canada, stated:—

"The trade of Canada has suffered very much in consequence of the changes, particularly in the Corn Laws of this country. Previously to those changes the duties upon foreign corn ranged between 20s. and 1s. per quarter; and at present, according to the law, they vary from 10s. to 1s. The duty upon colonial wheat and flour previously to the alteration in 1843 varied from 5s. to 6d. per quarter, according to the averages. During the continuation of the 3s. duty imposed by the Legislature of Canada on wheat imported into Canada from the United States, the duty in England was 1s., making together 4s. per quarter. I think it likely that the Canadian Legislature would repeal the Act imposing that duty, provided all the restrictions on the free navigation of the St. Lawrence were removed. It is my opinion that the trade in corn from Canada cannot be carried on with advantage without a protecting duty, particularly while the restrictions on the navigation of the St. Lawrence continue. Canada can now only employ British ships to carry wheat and flour to Great Britain. American craft are not permitted to navigate the St. Lawrence to Quebec nor to carry wheat and flour the produce of Canada to Montreal. The inland restrictions can be removed and the expense of transport reduced by allowing American vessels to transport the produce of Canada down the St. Lawrence to Montreal and Quebec. The American boats now employed do not pass much through the canals, but they may pass; they return chiefly by the canals to avoid the rapids above Montreal. There is no obstruction to American craft going up the St. Lawrence above Montreal; but no sea-going ships can go above Montreal by any of the canals. Montreal is the very height of the navigation. The first canal above Montreal is the Lachine canal: it goes from Montreal to Lake St. Louis; then the navigation is free water. The great disadvantage to Canada is, that the freights at New York are so much less than they are in Canada, because ships of all nations are employed in carrying goods from thence, while in Canada we are only allowed to ship in British vessels. I think the St. Lawrence

is the natural outlet for all the produce of Canada West as well as of the Western States of America. The quantity of wheat and flour exported from New York as well as from Canada during the summer months is so much larger than during the winter, that, generally speaking, the produce could be brought down by the St. Lawrence, and exported during the cheap part of the season, provided we had ships to take it away when it arrived at Montreal. When the communication has been open for shipments to this country of flour from the port of New York as well as from the ports of Canada, there has been a difference in the price of flour between the British and the New York side of the water, and while the price on the American side has been five dollars, it has been four on the Canadian side; but that arises from the difference of expense in transporting it across the Atlantic, the freight being so much higher in Canada than in the port of New York. Canadian wheat and flour can be taken from Canada in bond for shipment at New York.

" We have experienced a great want of tonnage in the St. Lawrence. That arises in part from the expense of the river-navigation; but if you took the restrictions away ships would be always sure of a cargo at Montreal, and the increase of the trade would enable the owners of Canadian steamers to take foreign vessels up to Montreal at a cheaper rate than they do at present. In the last year some timber was taken through the Richelieu canal to Lake Champlain and into the United States; it has been done in a small way, but the trial has been made, and I have been told it has answered. Independent of the present rates of duty it can be carried on from Canada, through the St. Lawrence, with more advantage than from the States, because they have not the timber there contiguous to the rivers as we have in Canada; it will therefore come down the St. Lawrence. The timber taken into the United States was not, I believe, for the purpose of export. The Canadian merchant cannot ship his produce to Great Britain, but he may to foreign countries, in any other than a British vessel. The best market that we could generally have is this country, provided we could export corn on as low terms as they can do from the United States or from other foreign parts. We do not consider that there is enough of shipping resorting to Canada for the purpose of bringing away the produce at a moderate rate of freight. The freights in Canada, generally speaking, are from 2s. 8d. to 3s. a barrel more than from New York. The average length of the voyage from Montreal to London is from 30 to 35 days, and from New York 24 or 25 days. It appears reasonable that the shipowner should have more from Montreal in consequence of the voyage being longer. If the restrictions were removed an American vessel might take a cargo of sugar from Brazil to Quebec, and then ship a cargo of Canadian

produce for this country. I have no doubt that, were the railway completed, sugar might be brought into Canada by way of Portland cheaper than by taking the whole voyage round. As the discriminating duties are repealed the Canadians may get foreign produce for a longer period of the year by way of the United States, and through the canals, to Montreal, than by the St. Lawrence; but I question whether it could be had cheaper. But when the railroad now in progress from Portland to Montreal is finished the transit of goods will depend very much upon the rate charged. Upper Canada is now generally supplied with Porto Rico and other sugar from the Spanish islands; it reaches them across the United States to the lakes and through the Oswego canal to Lake Ontario, or by the Erie canal by way of Buffalo. If the Navigation Laws were repealed, produce would be brought direct to Quebec, and then shipped by the St. Lawrence to supply the west parts of Canada. I think it would cause such an increase of trade as to enable the Government to reduce the tolls. I consider that Canada in all its interests, both agricultural and commercial, has suffered very much from the loss of the old Corn Laws. In fact, my opinion is that unless some alteration takes place in the existing Corn or Navigation Laws the trade from Canada cannot be carried on through the St. Lawrence, and that a large proportion of it will go to the United States.

"I have heard that the Board of Trade of Quebec, in their last report of April 1847, expressed an opinion opposed to that of Montreal on the question of the navigation of the St. Lawrence by ships of foreign nations; that Board is a Committee appointed by the merchants. The number of merchants at Quebec is not so large as at Montreal; but the chief trade in corn takes place at Montreal, not at Quebec; but, in my opinion, if American craft were allowed to go down the St. Lawrence to Quebec, Quebec would become a greater dépôt for grain and flour than Montreal. The report of the Quebec Board of Trade, I should think, expresses the sentiments of the merchants of Quebec, but not of Montreal. I resided in Canada many years ago."

Robert Alexander Gray, Esq., a London merchant, of the firm of Melhuish, Gray, and Company, stated:—

"Our house is principally engaged in general commerce with the Brazils, Mediterranean, America, Newfoundland, and Portugal. I have not, in the slightest degree, experienced any difficulty or sustained any loss in my commercial transactions from the operation of the Navigation Laws. The supply of

shipping has been sufficient, and the rates of freight moderate. The repeal of those laws would certainly not place me in a more favourable position with respect to the export and import trade; and if, by the repeal of those laws, British shipping were to decline, I feel confident, from the experience I have had, that we could not depend upon a sufficient and regular supply of foreign tonnage. The reason I assign for my opinion is, that we have generally found (except in times of great difficulty, such as the year which has just passed) that there was a sufficiency of British tonnage for all purposes in which the British merchant was at all interested; and if the trade were to be open to all nations generally without any protection to British ships, the British shipowner would, in a great many cases, be deterred from sending ships to foreign ports, feeling confident that at those ports his ships would come into competition with ships of foreign powers that were more cheaply built and more cheaply navigated. I am a shipowner; but our interest as shipowners is so little, compared with our interest as merchants, that I may say my opinion upon this subject is disinterested. I think that in a very short time the advocates for the repeal of the Navigation Laws would find they had advocated a very injudicious measure, because in some of the distant ports there might be a scarcity of ships, and in other instances a superabundance; and assuming that there was a scarcity by the displacement of British tonnage, the foreign shipowner would have an opportunity of charging the merchant a much higher rate than he would have done if there had been British ships in competition with him. If the repeal materially diminished freights, and the remuneration which the British shipowner at present receives, it would without doubt have the practical effect of giving the monopoly to the foreigner, and consequently the merchant would be placed in a worse position. I am persuaded the British could not compete with the foreign shipowner. I was examined before a committee in 1833, and had then an opportunity of stating that which my experience has since enabled me to confirm, *viz.* that where British seamen receive 50s. a month, foreign seamen only receive 25s. British shipowners are also compelled to supply the crew with small stores, as they are called, currants, and a great variety of other things, which contribute materially to the comfort of British seamen and which must naturally be attended with considerable expense, but from which the foreigner is entirely exempt. My experience upon the subject extends to the period at which reciprocity was introduced, which gave to Baltic ships the same privileges that British ships enjoyed in their own ports.

" I ascertained that foreign sailors received 25s. where British sailors received 50s. in 1833, and I have known it within a few months. I speak of Prussian, Danish, and Swedish sailors. The occupation for vessels of those nations

has been so much increased of late, they go to Brazil in great numbers. Messrs. Leach and Clark, from 1839 to 1847, loaded 102 British ships of 19,709 tons, and 50 foreigners of 12,591 tons. Mr. George Jones, between the years 1844 and 1848, loaded 13 British ships of 2760 tons, and 13 foreign vessels of 2787 tons. I have also a Return from Mr. Marzetti; he loaded, between 1843 and the present time, 29 British ships, making 6513 tons, and 26 foreigners, making 7763 tons, all trading from London to Rio de Janeiro. Formerly the trade was almost exclusively carried on under the British flag. I think I may attribute the alteration to this: brokers who load ships for the Brazils give a lumping sum, taking the chance of any profit which may arise from doing so; and the price at which the Swedish and Danish ships can be navigated induces them to make a much less rate than the British shipowner is justified in accepting. In many cases Danes and Swedes take a freight of £.1 a ton, with the chance of a freight home. The diminution in the number of British ships going to Brazil I consider to be entirely owing to the competition of foreign ships. I have known Swedish, Prussian, Danish, and Hanseatic ships bring sugar at 20s. to 30s. a ton to the Continent, but not frequently. Previous to that competition the rate of freight varied from £.3 to £.4 a ton, and when there has been a great abundance of shipping it has been as low as £.1 or £.2 a ton; it is now from 60s. to 65s.

" The rate of freight varies with reference to supply and demand. I should say that the merchant does not always sustain injury from the high rate of freight which he pays, because we generally find in all ports abroad as well as in the ports of Europe, that the price of produce is in effect regulated by the amount of tonnage that there is in the port to take it. In many instances, when the merchant has paid 10s. or £.1 a ton more freight, he has purchased his goods at from £.2 to £.3 less, owing to the scarcity of shipping, and he has paid more when there has been an abundance. For example: they ship from Sicily a very large quantity of lemons, oranges, and fruits of different descriptions; and the year before the last, owing to the number of American vessels arriving at Palermo for cargoes, the price of the fruit rose *fifty per cent.*

" The effect of the 3rd and 4th clauses of the Navigation Act is, that the produce of Asia, Africa, and America can only be brought to this country in British ships or in ships of the country in which the commodity is produced. The instances of inconvenience resulting therefrom are so few that I may say generally no inconvenience has been experienced. I may mention one inconvenience which has fallen within my experience. A vessel was chartered in Great Britain to the River Plate, leaving the charterer at liberty to send her to any port in Europe. The vessel arrived at Falmouth for orders; and as

it suited the convenience of the charterer, who owned part of the cargo on board, to send her to Antwerp, our friends were deprived of the opportunity of bringing their produce to this country, because having been imported into Antwerp they were not permitted to bring it away from thence, that being in violation of the Navigation Law. The shipment consisted of wet hides, and which were consequently sold at a loss at Antwerp. If it were found impracticable to remove such an inconvenience as that I have stated without the repeal of the Navigation Laws, I by no means think it of sufficient magnitude to justify such a repeal, as I consider that the Navigation Laws are upon the whole advantageous to British commerce. It is often a disadvantage to a merchant to charter a vessel, because he must, in that case, get the produce at the best rate he can; whereas if he simply trusts to the supply of tonnage in the port, he is under no obligation to ship goods which would expose him to a loss, but which, in the event of chartering, he must ship. The tendency of the 3rd and 4th clauses appears, irrespective of the securing the long voyage to British ships, to be the encouragement to direct importation from the place of production; and I think that direct importation essential to the British merchant and beneficial to the British consumer, this being the largest consuming country in the world. If permission to import the produce in question from Europe were conceded, no prudent merchant would send orders for the shipment of those goods, or charter ships for their conveyance to this country; because he could not know what quantity of produce might come into the market indirectly to interfere with his speculations, and rather than expose himself to that risk, he would forego any prospective advantage that might arise from a direct supply. Instead of making his purchases abroad he would prefer making them nearer home, because he would have an opportunity of knowing what quantity of goods there were in the neighbouring ports, and would regulate his orders accordingly. The harm would be, that the foreigner would have the carrying trade, or a very large amount of it. The British shipowner, instead of getting £.6, would get only 10s. a ton for bringing it from neighbouring ports to this country, and the merchant would soon feel the inconvenience through the shipowner's sides. I think the Americans would import a large amount of goods from Asia and Africa into the French and Dutch ports, which are conveniently situated for the transit of goods to the neighbouring countries. The axiom is to buy in the cheapest market and sell in the dearest; but the place in which the article is grown, and which should be the cheapest market, has not been so latterly, but the dearest. I refer to sugar and indigo, and a variety of articles coming from Asia and other parts. For some months past, to the great sorrow of many mercantile establishments, sugars have been selling at

£.10 to £.15 loss in this market. If the Navigation Laws were repealed it might have the effect of encouraging warehousing abroad. If goods can be warehoused cheaper in Holland or Hamburg than here, either the dock dues in England must be reduced or the goods sent abroad. I would rather warehouse here. Many foreign merchants warehouse sugar here with the view of selling it to the refiner to be refined in bond ; if the sugar went direct to Hamburg that could not be done. Warehousing abroad would not, upon the whole, I think, increase the charges, because the freight would be lower to those ports, and the saving in the warehousing would more than compensate for the transit from thence to this country. The Hamburg merchant would rather have the goods intended for Hamburg at home than here, but if by warehousing here he has the benefit of this market he will warehouse them here. Hamburg and Lubeck would not offer the same advantages as Great Britain, because here the merchants have a wide market open to them. Upon the whole review of the case I am of opinion that from the repeal of the Navigation Laws an immediate advantage might be derived, but that in the end it would be very injurious. I am certain that British ships would be beaten out of the market, and that in less than five years there would be scarcely a British ship navigated."

Mark Whitwill, Esq., shipowner and shipbroker, of Bristol, stated :—

" The ships of Bristol principally trade to the West Indies. We have a vessel occasionally in the China trade, and a large North American trade. I have considered the question of the repeal of the Navigation Laws with almost tears in my eyes, if I may use the expression, looking to the sacrifice of all I hold dear as a British seaman, for I am a British seaman. If foreigners would take the same amount of weight on their shoulders as we have to carry, I should have no fear of the competition. Their ships cost less than half the price of ours, and are sailed at less than half the expense. We have the weight of an enormous national debt to bear. I know from experience that the foreigner can build cheaper. A British-built common trading vessel from 200 to 400 tons, will cost complete to sea from £.15 to £.20 per ton register. The wages are, captain, £.10; mate, £.5; carpenter, £.4 to £.5; 2nd mate, £.3 10s.; sailors, £.2 10s. to £.2 15s. a month; victualling, according to rate of provisions, 1s. to 1s. 2d. per man per day, and in the cabin, for officers, 1s. 6d. to 2s. A Norwegian, Swedish, Danish, or Prussian vessel, will cost

complete to sea from £.7 to £.8 per ton upon an average. I may observe, however, that they are built of a different material, but they earn exactly the same freight. I recently chartered a Norwegian ship for the *Havannah* at the same rate of freight as that paid to English ships at the time. The name of the ship is the *Arandel* of Arundel. She would be insured at the same rate as an English ship of the same tonnage. The master of the vessel that I was alluding to receives £.4 10s., but many are better paid than our captains by their per centage upon the cargoes. The mate has £.2 to £.2 5s. per month; the 2nd mate and carpenter, £.1 12s. 6d. to £.1 15s.; and sailors, £.1 8s. to £.1 10s. Victualling will cost in these ships from 6d. to 7d. a day per man, and in the cabin about 1s. a day. It would be a decided advantage to an English shipowner to invest his capital in foreign ships, and to navigate with foreign sailors, in the event of the repeal of the Navigation Laws; but then arises the question, what are we to do with the artisans in this country? The *Arandel* is of oak frame, but planked with pine. She has been coppered at Bristol, which was an extra cost of about 20s. a ton. She is copper-fastened below the bends, and classes 7 A 1 at Lloyd's. The *Arandel* got a cargo as easily as any English ship would have done at the time. As a practical seaman acquainted with the anatomy of ships, if I had a cargo to ship I would as soon have it in that ship as in a British ship. An English-built ship, 12 A 1, would be taken before a Norwegian ship 7 A 1, but the danger of competition would remain, because a Norwegian ship would be quite capable of taking a cargo for the time being, and, at the end of seven years, if the vessel was thoroughly examined and proved sound, she would be re-classed from two to three years more; if unsound, she must go off the letter. But Norwegian ships are very durable. I have known a Norwegian ship 50 years of age. If the vessel were re-classed there might not be any difference of insurance. I have a British-built vessel, 23 years old, and they do not charge more insurance upon her than upon a 12 A 1 ship. The difference in the durability of an English ship as compared with a Norwegian ship is decidedly not equal to the difference in the cost of construction. If the Navigation Laws were repealed we should be beaten out of the market by the ships of the Northern nations generally. Those ships are already in competition with the Americans in many trades, but they have further to go. We are at their doors, but it is a long voyage to America, and that prevents their competing with Americans as they would compete with us. In the American newspapers that I have lately received they are showing us the folly and almost insanity of allowing those little States to compete with us.

" I consider the apprenticeship system a very great burden. I have had a vessel lying four or five months in Bristol, and

during the time have had to keep the apprentices. The object of the law appears to be, and in my opinion it is judicious, to train young men up preparatory for the navy if required. As I love and feel for my country I do not object to apprentices, and I think it is important for every youth trained in the merchant service to be fit for a man-of-war if required. I love my country, and would do anything for it. I have no objection to bearing that burden; but as far as it relates to my own individual profit I would not take apprentices. If we were compelled to take boys, not apprentices, we might employ them at from 7s. to 15s. a month, and as soon as we came into port we could discharge them; but now we are compelled to keep them whether we want them or not.

“Freights in some cases have been remunerative for the last two or three years, since the guano has been found out, and corn imported last year, but previously the shipping trade was very much depressed. We could not suffer any reduction at present; the freights offered at Bristol for timber are 32s. a load, and it will just about pay the expense of the ship. I submit the following statements showing the expenditure of British and foreign ships while in port, which proves the importance to tradesmen of employing British ships:—

BRITISH VESSELS.

	£. s. d.
July 1847.—Barque <i>Falcon</i> , from Quebec, 386 tons, and to Quebec	284 10 6
Sept. 1847.—Brig <i>Velocity</i> , from Trinidad and to Newfoundland, 154 tons	277 14 3
Jan. 1846.—Barque <i>William Bryan</i> , from Buctush to Odessa, 311 tons	200 18 0
Dec. 1847.—Schooner <i>Bezaleel</i> , from Zante and to St. Ives and Leghorn	151 12 6

FOREIGN VESSELS.

Nov. 1847.—Ship <i>Christine Sophie</i> , from Umea and to Tonsberg, 386 tons	78 5 0
Mar. 1845.—Brig <i>Elizabeth</i> , 146 tons, from Riga and to Barcelona	81 7 6
Nov. 1844.—Ship <i>Hebe</i> , 320 tons, from Gothenborg to Grunstadt	66 0 0
Oct. 1847.—Brig <i>Sex Sods Kende</i> , 169 tons, from Cronstadt to Liverpool and St. Domingo	21 16 0

The expenditure in Bristol of the ship *Commodore*, of Glasgow, 487 tons to and from Calcutta, amounted to £.1357 3s. 11d. The Dutch barque *Dries Vrienden*, 555 tons, from and to Batavia, in the same port, amounted to £.416 1s. 4d.

“The Norwegians, I should say, get the flax from Riga. They may import some sailcloth from England. They get

some anchors from England, but they have large iron foundries in Norway. A large portion of the iron used for ships they manufacture themselves. Norwegian ships take a great quantity of fish with them; they take herrings of their own curing. I have had the charge of several Norwegian vessels in Bristol, and I never knew an instance of one taking a cargo of salt provisions out of bond. The advantage a Norwegian ship has over a British ship, in regard to beef and pork, is that of its consumption not being one-half what it is in an English ship. I know this from observation. The major part of the Norwegian ships that come to Bristol are under my care, and I observe their manner of living, and have in addition the statements of the captains. I am of opinion that Norwegian shipping has increased since the reciprocity treaties came into operation. British shipping in the trade with Norway has decidedly not increased.

" I am persuaded that many of our British shipmasters are equal to any on the earth; but with so many ships as we have of all classes we necessarily must have many inferior men. I should say that as a body they are equal to the Swedish and Norwegian in moral qualities, and as far as seamanship goes I am persuaded that there are no men who surpass British shipmasters. With respect to theoretical knowledge, perhaps the class inhabiting a poor country like Norway may have a better education; for the station of a master there is considered of some importance. I am satisfied that a large proportion of our captains who trade to foreign countries are as well educated, and that they are not by any means inferior to what they were 20 or 30 years ago; they are better. British seamen are a thoughtless race of beings; but as far as being able to do their duty, I have sailed with men of all nations, and I can safely say that I never met any who surpassed British seamen in every respect, taking them for all and all. I should say they are equally good as they were 20 or 30 years since. In the trade to the British colonies there have been very powerful temptations held out to them to desert. Crimps get on board the vessels, and induce the poor thoughtless men to leave the ships, under the impression that they will get £.12 a month, though a great part of the £.12 a month goes into the hands of these crimps, and ' poor Jack ' gets very little of it. There are men in Quebec who get their living by this practice. By keeping the sailors out of the way for a time, vessels are compelled to give the exorbitant sums demanded by the crimps; that practice has grown up entirely of late years. The plan is pursued in the North American colonies generally, and I have heard the complaint that at Calcutta there is a like inducement, but not to so great an extent.

" The captains are kept constantly in employment. Their pay is £.120 a year in a ship of 437 tons, and their table is

found. The captain lays in for himself everything that he thinks proper. Ours are temperance ships. We always lay in an extra stock of sugar, tea, and coffee, and the men have it whenever they think proper. The practice is getting much more into repute. I have offered to contribute and to give one day in the week towards establishing a sailors' home at Bristol; and I think from my knowledge of sailors I understand the way of reaching their affections. We have just been fitting up a floating chapel, which has cost £1500. As I occupy rather a prominent position in Bristol, from being an old sailor, I do what I can for the sailors, and I endeavour to impress upon the masters that come within my reach the importance of obtaining a hold upon their affections. There are no men who are so sensible of kindness as sailors, when you can keep them clear of spirits. Without doubt there is a great difference between the higher class of ship-masters and the inferior class. In an island like ours, indented with so many harbours, and having so many merchant vessels of all classes and descriptions, we must necessarily have a great variety of character in the persons commanding them. Sometimes from the north of England they are regular bred sailors and clever men, but from circumstances they get put into a situation which they have not had sufficient training to appreciate, and they get wrong."

That portion of Mr. Whitwill's evidence which has particular reference to manning the navy, and which records his personal experience during the late war, will be found in the succeeding division of this work as more immediately bearing upon the question of national defence.

William Richmond, Esq., stated :—

" I have been a shipowner for 50 years, and I may state that I am descended from one of the oldest shipowners' families in England. My father's great-grandfather was a shipowner, and a wealthy one. My interest as a shipowner has been chiefly in the port of Newcastle, and I am still in business there as a shipowner to a very small extent. I was examined for four days before the Committee of the House of Commons on the Navigation Laws in 1847. I have looked through the evidence which I gave upon that occasion, and I should be glad to deliver the same again on oath. From a defect in the mode of expressing myself, and of memory, which is not perhaps to be wondered at in a man nearly 72 years of age, I

have resorted to tables*, in preference to taking the chance of not expressing myself as I ought to do. Mr. G. F. Young made a statement in his evidence before the Committee in the House of Commons of the comparative cost of English and foreign ships, but he had taken ships of high value, which was very much objected to; and I thought I could prove that if we went to Dantzic to build our ships we should be in no better condition at the end of 10 years, and therefore I prepared a table showing what would be the relative expenses of the *Reciprocity* (an imaginary ship), commanded by Captain Holdfast, and the *British Lion*, commanded by Captain John Bull, both ships of 300 tons and both of the same quality; but the one sailed by a Prussian and the other by a British crew. The real name of the English ship from whence the expenses were taken was the *Thetis*. The accounts are strictly correct; they are transcripts of the accounts of a British ship which in reality existed. This table was made upon the supposition that an Englishman went to Dantzic, and there built a ship, which we are told could be done for £.9 a ton, and that a Prussian did the same. Those two ships are supposed to start together, and to run for a period of 10 years†; at the expiration of that period the balance of profit cleared by the *Reciprocity* would be £.2109 13s. 4d., while the *John Bull* would have sunk £.970 16s. 8d. Since coming to town I have been put in possession by a Prussian captain of the following statement, showing the quantity and cost of provisions, &c. in Prussian ships engaged in the trade with England:—

	s. d.
Sunday.—1 lb. beef, 3d. ; 1 lb. bread, 1½d. ; grey peas, 1d. ; butter, 1½d. ; beer, 1d.	0 8
Monday.—½ lb. pork, 1½d. ; 1 lb. bread, 1½d. ; pea soup, 1d. ; butter, 1½d. ; beer, 1d.	0 6½
Tuesday as Sunday	0 8
Wednesday as Monday	0 6½
Thursday as Sunday	0 8
Friday as Monday	0 6½
Saturday as Monday	0 6½
Per man per week	4 2
Per man per diem	0 7

* I regret very much to be obliged to refrain from giving the elaborately constructed tables submitted by Mr. Richmond, but I earnestly recommend them to the attention of those desirous of studying this question.

+ The comparative statement here referred to presented by Mr. Richmond will also be found in the Report of evidence given before the select Committees appointed to examine into the policy and operation of the Navigation Laws. Mr. Joshua Wilson, in his evidence before the House of Lords, undertook to controvert Mr. Richmond's arguments; but as I did

" The following is the dietary and cost in a British ship of my own engaged in the coal, Baltic, or North American Colonial trade, per man per diem :—

	s. d.
To beef or pork bought fresh in England, and part of the foreign in casks, at an average price of 4d. per pound for the fresh England meat, consumed in conjunction with salted foreign, on an allowance of 2 lb. per man per diem	0 8
To bread, at 16s. per cwt., on an allowance of 1½ lb. per diem	0 2½
To flour, ½ lb., at 2d. per lb.	0 1
To suet, 2 oz., at 4d. per lb.	0 0½
To tea and sugar, 2d. per man per diem	0 2
To ½ pint of rum, or small beer equivalent thereto, at 2s. 6d. per gallon	0 2
To potatoes, peas, molasses, &c.	0 1
Actual cost per man per diem	1 5

" This is a statement founded on the custom of feeding English seamen in the above-stated trades, as they breakfast, dine, and sup on the best beef and pork the country produces, with no limit but their appetite, which they often during the middle watch at night indulge with an extra portion of beef and bread. The tea and sugar is considered as a mere auxiliary to wash down the more substantial portion of their morning and evening meal. There is a term that seamen use to designate a ship in which the sailors are fed badly; she is called a 'pinch-gut' ship; and there is much dissatisfaction and mischief created in those cases; but I may say, in nine cases out of ten, ships are provisioned in the manner I have described, and every man of respectability has a pride in putting the best provisions he can on board his ship.

" I could point to hundreds of respectable families that in the last 25 years have sunk to beggary and misery in consequence of the loss upon British shipping. I have no false delicacy upon the subject, and do not hesitate to say, if it had not been for some settled property that I have I might now have been in an almshouse, as, I may say, innumerable once comparatively wealthy individuals are at this time. The *Thetis* to which I have alluded was wrecked. She was in the trade

not think it expedient or necessary to a right understanding of the subject in dispute, I have omitted that part of Mr. Wilson's evidence, and for the same reason I think it fair to cancel the reiteration of Mr. Richmond. But I deem it right to state that Mr. Richmond has shown by these tables, to the satisfaction of most practical men, that a British owner having a British crew to pay and feed, could no more compete successfully with a foreigner manned by Prussian seamen, in a cheap foreign, than he could in an expensive English ship; and I believe that that is the point which Mr. Richmond seeks to establish.

36 years. It was not always a losing trade. The decline commenced with the reciprocity treaties. From the year 1817 the *Thetis* never made a winning voyage. It is well known in the neighbourhood from which I come*—in fact, my having been so often delegated to advocate the interest of a great seaport proves—that the losses of my ships have been the subject of regret with many who never attributed my ill fortune or loss to any mismanagement of my own. I have known, and know now, many shipowners who will not admit the badness of the shipping trade or the losses they have sustained, as the admission might ruin the credit on which they live, and they go on. The whole of my shipping from 1825 became a losing concern. There is an observation in my former evidence, and which I will now repeat. I assert solemnly, from my own knowledge, that half of the capital embarked in British shipping for the last 25 years has been lost, and that a very large portion of the remainder has yielded no profit; but in a chance and wind-governed trade like shipping luck may happen, and there are men, though few and far between, who have realized, not large fortunes, but considerable sums of money in the trade, from the circumstance of good fortune having assisted them. I will begin with the Baltic trade. In all those ports the British shipowner has been losing, and that has been the trade where I believe the most money has been sunk by the shipowners of England, because the low rate of foreign wages and provisions enables foreign shipowners to accept rates that are highly remunerative to them, but which are totally inadequate to our expenditure. I repeat that, in my opinion, without a protection equivalent to the difference of our expenditure, British ships will in a few years be superseded in all trades, as they have been in the Baltic trade. Those losses in the Baltic trade were incurred under the mutilated Navigation Laws. In the direct trade with the different nations of the Baltic we have no protection; and to that circumstance I consider it to be owing that the loss to British ships has occurred. Previously to the reciprocity treaties British shipowning interest was decidedly more profitable than it is now. In the direct trade with Russia or Prussia there is now no protection to the British ship. There was a protection previously to the reciprocity treaties being signed, which, had it been allowed to remain, would have made a very material difference, amounting as it did to about 5 per cent. upon the cargo, double light dues, double pilotage, and double dock dues, and which taken altogether came to 20 per cent. upon the amount of freight brought in foreign ships. Prussian ships are manned with as few men as English. I do not think Prussian sailors are so

* Mr. Richmond was delegated to attend the Committee by the shipowners of Tynemouth.

handy and good as British ; but a Prussian ship, navigated by the same number of sailors, will perform the voyage in the same time. I know that Prussian ships very often make five voyages in a year from Memel to London, and I never knew a British ship make that number. In a bad night I should prefer English seamen ; but in an ordinary routine voyage, without anything peculiar in it, there is little difference between the two ; their physical powers are equal. Foreign seamen are more subordinate. They are willing to heave the ballast into their ships in London, which English seamen will not do ; and it is to something of that innate and daring spirit which makes him occasionally insubordinate that I ascribe our splendid exploits on the ocean ; it is the nature of the British seaman that makes him so. Prussian sailors never were more sober than the British. I speak within limits when I say I do not believe there are more immoral or drunken towns in existence than the maritime towns abroad. I think Prussian sailors swallow more spirits in a week than British sailors do in a fortnight, and they always did ; but there is a difference even in the English sailors, and I have seen it lately. English sailors do not drink so much as they did formerly. If I were to say English captains had improved I think I should state that which was not the fact. When I was a boy, it was the custom for the respectable and wealthy people in maritime towns to send one or two of their sons to sea, if they happened to have large families, as the best and readiest means of providing for them, and rearing them to a profession in which they might have a chance of prospering ; but for the last 25 years respectable people have hardly ever sent a boy to sea, and the consequence has been that we have had to take the captains of our merchant ships from rather a less-educated class of men than they used to be 50 or 60 years ago. I do not think that their seamanship is impaired, but perhaps their manners may be a little less refined. There is an evil with respect to insurance offices. As a proof, I have a statement of two of the largest marine insurance associations in the North of England, which 25 years ago would have been composed entirely of shipowners. There is a society called the 'Ocean,' with 227 members in it, of which there are 81 shipowners, and 146 tradesmen. Another society, called the 'Equitable,' consists of 193 members, of which 63 are shipowners, and 130 men of different trades. One society is for ships of the diphthong or second-class character ; and the other entirely for first-class ships. I submit a table showing the rate of hire for British ships in the coal, North American, and Baltic trades, from 1817 to 1848, which are more immediately affected by the reciprocity treaties :—

Average of Years for	Coal Trade. Coals per Ton to London.	Rates of Freight.												
		Petersburgh Freights.						Timber.						
		Deals.	Cean Hemp.	Tallow.	Quebec.	Lower Port.	Memel.	Deals.	Cean Hemp.	Tallow.	Quebec.	Lower Port.	Memel.	
1817	s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	
1820	9 11½	4 3 1½	2 18 1½	1 16 0	2 16 3	2 7 6	1 2 7½							
1821	9 10	4 3 0	2 15 7½	1 15. 1½	2 0 4½	2 3 9	1 2 9							
1824														
1826	8 9	3 12 6	2 10 0	1 8 10½	2 1 10½	1 16 3	1 0 0							
1829														
1830	8 2	3 8 10½	2 8 9	1 7 0	1 18 0	1 13 9	0 0 19 0							
1833														
1834	8 2½	3 9 6	2 8 0	1 7 3	2 1 3	1 16 6	0 0 18 10							
1837														
1838														
1841	8 8	3 6 0	2 6 0	1 6 0	2 1 0	1 17 0	0 0 19 6							
1842	6 9½	2 11 1½	1 15 7½	1 0 6	1 14 8	1 11 7	0 0 15 9							
1845														
1846..	7 1	2 19 4	2 2 0	1 2 0	1 19 1	1 16 3	0 0 18 0							
1847..	7 9	4 4 0	2 7 0	1 11 0	2 7 0	2 2 0	1 3 0							
1848..	5 3	2 5 0	1 10 0	0 17 0	1 15 0	1 11 0	0 0 16 0							

Mr. Porter and other gentlemen having stated that shipowning is a profitable business, I submit the following documents for the purpose of showing that it has been a losing concern. There are two more companies, and they both make the same statement:—

“ Hartlepool Original Shipping Company ; capital £.50,000, in shares of £.10 each ; number of ships, 21 ; commenced 1836, dissolved 1843 ; amount per share returned to the shareholders, being the produce of stock and effects, £.2 17s. 6d.

“ Hartlepool Union Shipping Company ; capital £.46,780, in shares of £.20 each ; number of ships, 18 ; commenced 1838, dissolved 1846 ; amount per share returned to the shareholders, £.9 15s. 6d.

“ Hartlepool General Shipping Company ; capital £.16,000, in shares of £.25 each ; number of ships, 6 ; commenced 1836, dissolved 1844 ; amount per share returned to the shareholders, £.7 19s.”

Mr. Richmond during his evidence submitted several other tabular statements, which it would be extremely difficult to condense to the size of this volume, but they are all replete with interest. In particular, he presented a comparative statement of the progressive increase in the actual registered mercantile tonnage of the United Kingdom, and

of the United States of America, exhibiting the increase in both cases. It will, however, be sufficient for our purpose to state that Mr. Richmond makes it apparent the mercantile navy of Great Britain, between 1820 and 1847, has only increased (exclusively of the colonies) from 2,439,029 to 3,807,921, or 868,892 tons; and that during the same interval the marine of the United States, comprising registered, enrolled, and licensed tonnage, distinctions without a difference, has increased from 1,280,166 to 2,839,046, or 1,558,880 tons. The tonnage of the United States for 1848, according to the statement of the American Secretary to the Treasury, amounts to 3,145,993, and the same Official estimates that the shipping of that country, arguing from past successes, will, in 1857, attain to 7,926,337 tons. In 1820 the tonnage of the British plantations and colonies, together with that of Asiatic dependencies, amounted to 209,564 tons, and in 1847 to 644,603 tons.

John Mitchell Mitchell, Esq., a merchant and shipowner of Leith, stated :—

“ I am Consul for the King of Belgium for a very considerable district of Scotland. There was a large public meeting held lately in Leith on the subject of the Navigation Laws. The resolutions agreed to were very strong; they are embodied in a petition sent to the House of Lords remonstrating against any alteration in the Laws. I may say it is the unanimous opinion of the people of Leith, because it was a large meeting, presided over by the chief magistrate, and there was no opposition made to the resolutions proposed. I lately made a tour through all the various seaport towns upon the east coast of Scotland, and conversed with many of the merchants, and their opinion was much the same as that expressed at the public meeting in Leith. I have travelled very extensively on the Continent, and I may say I have also been through almost the whole of Denmark of late, and the seaport towns in Sweden, and I have had ample opportunities of seeing the mode of building and the kinds of ships built in those countries. The ships built in Germany are very superior, and much cheaper than we can by any means build in this country. They are generally of

oak, to the same extent as ships built in this country. I refer to Mecklenburg, Wismar, Rostock, Stralsund, Stettin, Dantzic, and other places. I find that in most of those countries the daily wages paid to ship carpenters are 1s. 6d. in the winter, 1s. 10d. from six to six, and 2s. 2d. from five to seven. The cost of a ship per ton is at Dantzic £.8 10s., quite complete for sea. If properly classed by Lloyd's surveyors upon the spot, she would be fully A 1 10 years; but Lloyd's system of management is very peculiar, they only admit foreign ships to a particular classification. They suppose that no wood is equal to English wood, and I am prepared to state that that is not the fact; my principal reason is this: the timber used on the Continent is cut in the fall of the year, and therefore the sap is not in it; we in this country, for the sake of the bark principally, fall our timber in the spring; and from personal experience I may add that I have seen the ships, and noticed their durability. I have also made inquiry, and am prepared to assert, that but for the fastenings there is nothing which can be superior to a great many of the ships built of foreign oak timber; I pronounce it to be as good as British timber; it must obviously be so. The oak of both countries grows on a similar soil—there is nothing which can justify us in calling the British oak superior; there is no reason that I can see for it. Foreigners build their ships in some of those ports very strong, not like the Sunderland ships. We consider the Sunderland ships built for sale as inferior. I am referring entirely to iron-fastened vessels, at the price of £.8 10s. At Mecklenburg, £.8 10s., completely fitted for sea, but iron-fastened; Swedish, also iron-fastened, £.7; Danish, copper-fastened, £.10. The Swedish ship has an oak frame, and the rest fir. All new ships are A 1. The question is, how many years she shall remain so. A Danish ship might be eight years; and a Swedish ship five years; Norwegian, £.8, seven years.

"I now come to two ships belonging to ourselves. One of 78 tons, which I shall first mention, was built at Leith under our own particular inspection, and of foreign oak timber. She cost £.1578 or £.20 a ton, and only classes seven years; we attended most particularly to economy; we watched the work most carefully; imported the wood ourselves, and furnished it to the shipbuilder under the most strict conditions. We paid upon a great part of that wood £.1 5s. per load, and £.1 per load for the rest; the total quantity consumed might amount to about 120 tons or loads. The amount of duty paid for the timber in that ship was about £.130, I think. The schooner's name is the *Mayville*, and if built at Dantzic she would have cost about £.12 a ton in the same relative state. I have the particulars of another ship, built in Nova Scotia. This ship only stands 4 A 1 at Lloyd's; we paid for that vessel £.850; she is 160 tons, but we had to pay, to make her in a sufficient state even

to obtain the four years' classification £.338 1s. 2d. for carpenters' work only. In addition to that we paid for sails and finishing the cabin £.144 4s. 7d., making altogether £.1332 5s. 9d., equal to £.9 per ton. This vessel is almost entirely of fir, and fir that is not durable. There is some little birch in her. In regard to the prices of ships at Leith generally, I may also state, that I inquired at a shipbuilder's there the price of a vessel on the stocks, ready for launching. One of 250 tons, to stand 10 A 1 at Lloyd's, is ten guineas per ton carpenter's measurement for the hull and spars only. Another clipper vessel, of about 250 tons, is twelve guineas a ton for the hull and spars. Another, a new schooner of 84 tons, £.7 per ton, measuring only 71 tons new measurement, and making the price £.8 6s. per ton new measurement for the hull, masts, and spars. I am a part-owner of foreign ships, and therefore am intimately acquainted with the subject. I have seen them building, and I know the prices exactly.

" The wages of the master of a Prussian ship are £.3 per month, and 5 per cent. upon the freight. I calculate the percentage to be nearly £.2 more in a ship of about 160 tons; a Mecklenburg vessel of a similar size the same wages; a Hanseatic vessel of 75 tons, £.3 15s., and 2½ per cent; a Belgian, £.4 per month, without any per-cent; Swedish, 90-ton vessel, £.2 10s., and 5 per cent; Danish, 110 tons, £.2 5s., and 5 per cent; Dutch, 160 tons, £.4, and no per-cent; Norwegian, £.3 12s., and 5 per cent; the clipper *Mayville*, £.5 per month; the colonial-built brig, £.7 per month; an English brig of 200 tons, £.8 10s. per month. I have also the wages of the seamen. I obtained these particulars from personal inquiry within these few weeks. Most of those ships to which I am referring brought cargoes to our house; and being very much interested in the question in a national point of view, I endeavoured to make myself fully acquainted with the facts."

Mr. Mitchell here handed in a statement, in a tabular form, of which the following is a recapitulation:—

SEAMEN'S WAGES PER MENSEM.

	CREW.	£.	s.		CREW.	£.	s.
Prussian . . .	8 . .	16	16	Dutch . . .	8 . .	15	1
Mecklenburg . . .	8 . .	16	0	Norwegian . . .	5 . .	10	19
Hanseatic . . .	5 . .	11	10	Scottish . . .	6 . .	15	16
Swedish . . .	5 . .	9	1	Colonial . . .	9 . .	25	2
Danish . . .	7 . .	11	1	English . . .	8 . .	28	15

FOOD PER DIEM. s. d.

Northern Nations, say about	0	8
Scottish	1	1½
English	1	3

" There is a law in most of those foreign countries that when a ship is laid up the seamen only get half wages; that is a special arrangement under a legislative enactment in some countries, but in practice they must not be paid off until they return home to their own country, and they are fed during the months they are absent from their own ports. If they lie up in their own ports in the winter they are paid off. I consider an iron-fastened vessel quite suitable for European voyages, except to the Mediterranean. I think the principal obstacle to the British competing with foreign shipping is the subject which has been referred to, namely, the enormous cost of wood, and the heavy duty still existing; 15s. a load is a very considerable tax upon the material. If any advantage is to be given to foreign shipping we ought to have the raw material entirely free of duty. I may say that in Leith we use scarcely anything but Baltic timber; we use English and a little Scottish oak, but we cannot get much, and the price is high.

" There was a large trade at Leith previously to passing the Reciprocity Act, the treaties of which very much interfered with shipbuilding. At Leith it fell off in a very considerable degree indeed, perhaps one-third or two-thirds in a very short time afterwards. It did not fall off instantaneously, but the trade was injured gradually. I remember 13 ships having been upon the stocks at one time at the small port of Kincardine. That was about 18 years ago; and there is not now, I believe, one single ship building there. There are a number of towns in the Frith of Forth at which they built ships. Kincardine is one of those small places where a considerable trade was carried on, but it has fallen off to a great extent. The ships built in Leith and at Kincardine trade principally to the Baltic and the Mediterranean. There is an increase of commerce generally in the country, and a large increase of population. I maintain that if we had been protected from the beginning of the peace we might have been builders of shipping for all the world. We are naturally shipbuilders; we have seaports all round, and are thus enabled to build ships; and would, therefore, rather manufacture ships than cotton. I am quite aware ships are continually building; the old ships are not burnt, they are employed for other purposes; some people must have good first-class ships for particular uses, but the old ships are kept on; they cannot destroy them. I understand they have been building extensively in Sunderland, to the ruin of a vast number of ship-builders; they seem to have a mania for shipbuilding there. The number of ships may have increased one-third since the time I mentioned; but I would say that one-fifth of the increase is composed of colonial-built ships. While the colonial people were building ships, and they sent over the wood to this country, we could not get the wood to build ships or houses

without paying a duty of 10s. or 11s. 6d. They built ships and sent them over to this country; the manufactured article paid no duty. I consider that to have been one great cause, not only of the injury done to shipbuilders but to shipowners, because some of those ships have destroyed the lives of the poor emigrants, or have damaged the cargoes, and entailed upon us a character which we do not deserve. There has been a great additional commerce in the country demanding additional shipping, but we have been injured by the foreign ships, and we have been injured by our colonial ships, so that the shipowners of this country have not gained, but have lost considerably by the Reciprocity Treaties. I do not say that the Reciprocity Treaties are as bad as they can be, because it is contemplated to do something worse, but they have done a great deal of injury.

"That our copper is cheaper than that of other countries is an erroneous supposition. I am agent for Mr. Muntz at Leith, and sell considerable quantities. The metal that goes abroad is *carried free*. The ships very often go back in ballast, and they take the copper at prime cost. *It costs no more to the foreigner than to us.* I do not see that the foreigner can supply himself with many articles in this country, excepting chain cables and anchors. They may get sails, but I never heard of or knew an instance of a foreigner getting cordage. I conceive that more importance is attached to sails and ropes, metal, and chains and anchors, than naturally ought to belong to the question. We paid £.969 7s. for the carpenters' work and the wood for the vessel I have described. The contract price for the hull was £.863 7s. The sails and ropes came to £.208 1s.; the chains and anchors, £.94 2s. 9d.; so that we paid nearly £.1000 for timber and labour. Mercantile men consider that British ships pay higher charges than the ships of those countries with which we have Reciprocity Treaties. We have sent several vessels to Russia, of which we get accounts not at all expressing what the charges are. I do not think shipowners are sufficiently represented abroad. The Government sends out those who are not mercantile men as Consuls. I remember in one case they sent a major in the army to Stockholm. I have no doubt that he would be useful in his own particular walk in life; but I do not think that shipowners imagine a major in the army to be at all suitable to discuss difficult points of maritime law. I can state a fact in corroboration of what I have said, that in sending one of our vessels, the *Tweed*, to Sweden, our captain was charged for a certificate of origin, and he had to go to the British Vice-Consul to certify that his vessel was a British ship; the British register was not held as sufficient evidence, and he was charged two dollars for having it certified that the ship was British. We paid altogether 18s. to the British Vice-Consul, a Swedish gentleman, and the captain had to go some 50 or 60 miles, at

the risk of his life, before he could get his vessel cleared at the place where he had to take his cargo. That happened at Nonksping.

"I think the repeal of the Navigation Laws would prove a very serious injury to all the seaports on the coast of Scotland and England; a great proportion of the inhabitants are actively employed in shipbuilding and repairs, and in the trades connected therewith. I think there are, in Leith alone, 3000 or 4000 people depending upon the shipping occupation, and the various other relative trades. We find freights pretty equal; and no want of tonnage. Freights are generally very moderate; we never complain. There has been no question mooted or started, either now or previously to the agitation, which has not been occasioned by the gentlemen of the cotton trade. The feeling generally in Leith is, that the Navigation Laws work as well as can be expected.

"I would certainly recommend a compulsory examination, not of existing masters and mates (the mates might be examined for masters); but there ought to be a law, to take place in a short fixed period, for their compulsory examination, maintaining a system of education, which I should hope the Government might see proper to legislate upon. I would state that British masters are not generally so well educated as foreigners; but, at the same time, I cannot say that I have discovered anything dishonest or dissipated among our Scottish captains, more than among other captains of foreign countries. I have seen foreign captains at Leith of a very dissipated and ignorant description."

George Lyon Phillips, Esq., a Member of the House of Assembly in Jamaica, was examined with reference to certain memorials emanating from that body, but as the general character of this gentleman's evidence had no particular reference to the operation of the Navigation Laws, it is considered unnecessary to include it.

William Henry Noss, Esq., Registrar of shipping, also gave evidence before the Committee, but chiefly with respect to the mode in which he performed his duties, and as to the degree of certainty or otherwise which attended his operations when furnishing Returns. No evidence of importance to the subject before us was, however, elicited by this gentleman's examination.

REVIEW OF THE EVIDENCE.

HAVING presented the reader with a comprehensive abstract or analysis of the evidence given upon oath before the Select Committee of the House of Lords, the argument for and against the Navigation Laws may be considered as fairly set out. Ultras will possibly deny the assumption, but the mass of unbiassed men, to whose calm judgment this subject forcibly addresses itself, will, I trust, be satisfied that sufficient elements have been adduced out of which to frame a correct judgment. With this impression upon my mind I should have preferred leaving the testimony of the *forty-four* business-men whose opinions I have thus given to fight their own way; but, as that course might have been considered by some unsatisfactory and inconclusive, I shall endeavour briefly to review the evidence *seriatim*, in the hope of eliciting the relative value and importance of the several statements.

The first witness whose evidence directly challenges the Navigation Laws in all their bearings, and condemns them without any reservation, is George Richardson Porter, Esq., Director of Statistics to the Board of Trade. Without question, Mr. Porter's opinions are entitled to great weight, as being those of one whose interest cannot be supposed to have swayed his judgment. It is true that Mr. Porter acted under instructions from Mr. Milner Gibson, the Vice-President of the Board of Trade; but

there is no reasonable ground for believing that those instructions would have warranted him in warping facts, or dressing up statistics, in order to favour a certain preconceived theory.

Mr. Porter commenced his evidence before the Select Committee of the House of Lords by the justification and defence of the annexed table, headed "Protected and Unprotected Trades:—"

A statement of the tonnage of British ships that entered the ports of the United Kingdom from different foreign countries and British possessions in each of the years 1824 and 1846; distinguishing the tonnage employed in the trade with British possessions, and which is protected by the Navigation Laws, from the tonnage employed in the trade with foreign countries, and which is unprotected from competition with foreign ships.

Protected Trade.	1824.	1846.	Unprotected Trade.	1824.	1846.
Coast of Africa and Cape of Good Hope .	20,742	52,173	Russia	239,185	452,438
St. Helena and Ascension .	477	709	Sweden	17,074	12,625
Mauritius . . .	2197	34,866	Norway	11,419	3313
British India . .	48,066	207,991	Denmark	6738	9531
British N. American Colonies .	427,832	1,076,162	Prussia	94,664	63,425
Australian Colonies .	4073	39,129	Germany	67,345	206,201
British West Indies .	244,971	183,742	United Netherlands	68,285	H. 274,067
Fisheries	45,925	15,191	France	82,650	B. 108,908
Jersey, Guernsey, &c.	98,214	125,961	Portugal, Azores, and Madeira .	58,043	556,821
			Spain	45,723	74,761
			Italy	40,793	65,719
			Gibraltar	5454	98,863
			Malta	3324	14,523
			Turkey, Morea, and Egypt .	23,269	8176
			Tripoli, Barbary, and Morocco .	1174	97,071
			China	28,270	
			Sumatra, Java .	3075	58,593
			Foreign West Indies .	9566	8526
			United States of America .	44,994	62,240
			Mexico & States of South America .	46,787	205,123
			Ionian Islands .	6391	170,611
			Cape Verd Islands .	168	11,570
			South Sea Islands .	581	168
	803,097	1,735,924		904,223	2,558,809
Increase 642,827 tons, or 94.37 per cent.			Increase 1,654,586 tons, or 182.98 per cent.		

Mr. Porter was examined with reference to this table at great length, and I think it was most clearly shown that its facts were utterly valueless as a basis whereon to build an argument against the laws. It was proved that the traffic between this country and Holland, Belgium, and France, consisting almost wholly of steam vessels conveying passengers and a nominal amount only of goods, formed the bulk of the supposed increase upon the unprotected side, and that in many other respects the Return was equally inappreciable for any sound argumentative purpose. It will be seen that if Holland, Belgium, and France are removed wholly from the table, the amount of increase upon the unprotected side, instead of 183 per cent., will be very little more than 100 per cent., while the increase upon the other side of protected trades, in which a lamentable deficit appears with respect to our British possessions in the West Indies, is very little less. Mr. Porter was next called upon to explain certain papers submitted to the Committee of the House of Commons, relative to the increase of British shipping as shown by the Custom-house entries and clearances, all of which I leave without comment to the reader. But with reference to the alleged increase of British over American tonnage, some curious facts were elicited which demand a few words by way of remark. Mr. Porter, it must be presumed inadvertently, furnished only the registered tonnage of the United States, amounting to 1,068,764 tons, without mentioning a still larger proportion consisting of enrolled or licensed tonnage. But at the same time that this inadvertence was committed with respect to the extensive coasting, fishing, and other tonnage of America, Mr. Porter studiously magnified the amount of British shipping by the introduction of every description of British and colonial tonnage, the existence of which could be ascertained, including all river and other craft of and above fifteen tons burthen. But, to turn from Mr. Porter's statistics, which all must consider extremely

faulty, let us go to that gentleman's opinions as to the good likely to result from the abrogation of the Navigation Laws. It was shown that the effect of the Reciprocity Treaties with the Northern countries had been a decline of British shipping, and a corresponding increase of foreign. In one instance, namely Russia, there was exhibited an increase, but not to the same comparative extent as the increase of Russian tonnage; and the same with regard to the United States of America. Mr. Porter endeavoured to reconcile these facts with a continuance, and even an increase, of prosperity on our parts. He considered that our shipping was more profitably employed elsewhere, or that the amount of capital heretofore embarked in the shipping trading with the Northern ports had been diverted into more lucrative channels. With this view of inducing British capitalists to seek more eligible employment for their capital, Mr. Porter would also give the foreigner every facility, whether as regards our direct or indirect trade; and has further stated his opinion that, as our ships are so superior to those of foreigners, the British shipowner can with advantage to himself compete with the foreigner under any circumstances. Fortunately for the mercantile and shipping interests of Great Britain thus jeopardised, Mr. Porter's opinion will not go forth to the world as being thoroughly orthodox, for it will be seen that men who have been in business all their lives have openly repudiated the doctrine.

With regard to the propriety of allowing the produce of our colonial and Indian possessions to be brought into Europe, and from thence re-imported into England, which Mr. Porter thinks should be permitted, there are abundant facts adduced by substantial witnesses to show its inexpediency. Upon the question of shipbuilding in this country, which Mr. Porter considers a matter of minor importance, inasmuch as he does not object to British shipowners building their ships abroad, there will also be found a very

wide difference of opinion. But Mr. Porter states his belief that the repeal of the Navigation Laws will give an impetus to shipbuilding in this country, and this sentiment is industriously echoed and re-echoed by that gentleman's mercantile disciples. A marvellously cheap ship in course of building for £.10 a ton at Sunderland was stopped in consequence of "the builder's getting into difficulties," and another ship of 9 A 1, built at Dundee in 1847, was found to cost £.14 2s. per ton.

There is only one other of the many points suggested by Mr. Porter's evidence upon which I will at present remark—the question of warehousing. When we look at the enormous buildings attached to our different docks, and consider the endless array of warehouses, granaries, &c., with which not only London, but each of our commercial seaports abounds, the subject of warehousing in England assumes a matter of the most vital importance to our prosperity as a nation. Mr. Porter believes that the capital of England would continue to attract the great bulk of merchandise of all the world to this country; and that, even to a still greater extent, England would be the entrepôt of Europe and of the civilised world. It must, however, be remembered that there is another and more irresistible attraction than our capital, which now most powerfully draws the produce of foreign countries thither—the Navigation Laws. But for the warehousing in England our exports could not be to anything like their present magnitude. Mr. Porter's table of protected and unprotected trade would look vastly changed if the direct commerce which England now almost exclusively enjoys were shared with foreigners, and permission conceded to export Asiatic produce from Europe. There is too much reason to fear we should, in that case, ere long find our warehousing, and all other advantages which we now possess over foreign nations, scattered to the four winds of heaven.

Mr. Porter's arguments will meet with a serious check

from the straightforward business-like evidence of Mr. Aylwin. And here it is not out of place to remark that Mr. Aylwin's testimony is liable to no imputation of class interest. Belonging to a firm in Calcutta extensively engaged in the importation of merchandise, it would have been to his interest to recommend the repeal of the Navigation Laws, if thereby cheaper and more certain means of transport would be placed at his disposal. Not being a shipowner, but a merchant, he might be expected to reap a large share of any benefit accruing from the reduction of freight, and an abundance or a superfluity of shipping; but the experience of that gentleman suggested that neither the one nor the other advantage would eventually be found to result from the change. On the contrary, he stated to the Committee, that his trading operations would be materially interfered with—that the Laws did not act as a restriction upon trade—that he would not be able to depend upon a regular supply of shipping—and that if freights *were* lowered, which would be extremely doubtful, the reduction would be something which would neither fall to his share nor to that of the consumer, but would only be so much added to the gains of producers and salesmen. This argument is laid down in the most lucid manner, and, as far as it relates to the trade with India, may be viewed as conclusive. The certain loss of the carriage of nearly the whole of the goods now brought to this country for exportation, which would result from opening the trade to foreigners, is clearly shadowed out, and a calculation of the pecuniary sacrifice which it would occasion demonstrated in a way beyond the power of ingenuity to shake. Mr. Aylwin has also most satisfactorily cleared up the disputed point as to Lascars, by showing that humanity alone dictated the law which denies them the privileges of British seamen, and further showed that East India country ships labour under no peculiar hardship or inconvenience whatever. Mr. Aylwin's

remarks upon this point are substantiated by the evidence of Mr. Young, and also by other witnesses.

Mr. Godeffroy, a native of Hamburgh, and a merchant of that "free city," appeared before the Committee to warn us from blind adherence to antiquated prejudices. This gentleman endeavoured to persuade the Committee that ships could be built as cheaply in England and Scotland as in Hamburgh; and that if we repealed the Navigation Laws, foreigners would furnish orders to shipbuilders in this country in such numbers, that that trade would increase in an astounding ratio. He was, however, somewhat staggered when homely questioned as to the reason why he did not avail himself of the many advantages which he considered to belong to an English-built ship, and his confusion and equivocation was more natural than valuable as an auxiliary to his argument in favour of building in England. He "might," or "he might not," do so: "when the opportunity presented itself he would decide." This ingenuous foreigner told the Committee that he would be very happy to supply this country with various commodities which were either not saleable in the Continental markets, or of which, owing to the Elbe's being blocked with ice, he could not avail himself; and, upon the whole, enacted his part as any other equally patriotic foreigner would have done. Mr. Godeffroy is not to be blamed, but let those who listen to counsel so insidiously tendered, look well to the consequences.

The evidence of Mr. Powles, the Secretary to the London Dock Company, contains some forcibly acute observations. Mr. Powles, as the representative of a large company deeply interested in the prosperity of the warehousing system, offered testimony of a most important character; but although the bias of that gentleman in favour of existing laws is to be accounted for, if by no other cause, by his own and his company's stake in the discussion, it cannot be

forgotten that an injury to the London Dock Company would be equally an injury to the great trading community of England, of which it is part and parcel, but more particularly to the mass of owners of warehouses throughout the country. The danger of yielding to Mr. Porter's doctrine in favour of the admission of Asiatic produce, not brought direct to this country, Mr. Powles exemplified in the case of Manilla hemp; and also with respect to the Havre cotton grievance, so loudly sounded by the repealers during the last session of Parliament. The retaliatory threat of Prussia Mr. Powles showed to be unworthy of notice; and the Montreal outcry respecting a want of cheap tonnage, to result from causes totally foreign to the Navigation Laws.

Mr. Allhusen, a German, naturalised in England, and now a merchant at Newcastle-upon-Tyne, adduced as a reason why the Navigation Laws should be repealed, that he was, some ten years ago, unable to ship corn in Prussia for America in British ships, in consequence of the prohibition contained in the American Navigation Laws. It appeared that Prussian ships could not be induced to carry their corn at the customary low rate, because there was no return freight from America available; and Mr. Allhusen would, in that case, have generously waved his power to employ foreign ships in favour of English ships, leaving the latter to obtain return freights as they best might. As a grievance, it is ill defined and uncorroborated. Mr. Allhusen, however, though classing as a naturalised British merchant, possesses "small shares in 18 or 20 foreign ships," which may account for his attempt to magnify a trivial fault into a high crime against free trade. The complaint of this gentleman against the Reciprocity Treaties is not very intelligible. He told the Committee that those treaties could not remain long in force, because they are not based upon a principle of equality, and at the same time stated

that the English shipowner had been able to compete with the foreigner successfully. He decried Prussian shipping, and dilated upon the advantages of the British shipbuilder ; and, moreover, conveyed the information—though not very satisfactorily to sceptical persons—that ships can be repaired and outfitted in the Thames for an Indian voyage cheaper than at Hamburgh. It would, however, be rather more to the purpose, if the circumstance of Hamburgh merchants, provisioning and fitting out ships in England, were of more frequent occurrence. This gentleman, also, essayed to lay the “ flattering unction ” to our doubts and fears, that foreigners would do, if the Navigation Laws were repealed, that which they have never hitherto done—build merchant ships in England. In order to strengthen our nerves, and reconcile us to submit to the simple operation of abolishing our Navigation Laws, Mr. Allhusen pointed to the success of the free city of Hamburgh ; but this sophism was very much weakened by the naïve confession that Hamburgh is in want of all that merchants can be induced to send thither, whether cotton, corn, or any other commodity. Hamburgh, hemmed in by walls, can produce nothing but merchants and consumers, and therefore requires everything to be brought to it ; and as the navigation of the river is intricate, every inducement is necessarily offered for ships to ascend it, and which, of course, they would never attempt, were it not for the certainty of obtaining that which they required. The contradictions in Mr. Allhusen’s evidence are very numerous, and the reader will be at a loss to understand from it whether foreign sailors would or would not be willing to serve in British merchant ships engaged in making long voyages. He did not actually assert that British ships could be built and sailed cheaper than foreign ships, if the Navigation Laws were repealed ; and yet he stated that British would be more profitable than foreign ships, which sounds to me rather paradoxical. Had not

this gentleman been naturalised for so long a time, I should have attributed such contradictions to have arisen from unacquaintance with the English language.

Mr. Coulborn, a Liverpool shipowner and shipping agent, supplied the Committee with some startling facts as to the state of our trade with the United States. It has been a favourite argument with advocates for repealing the Navigation Laws, that by so doing we should open up new sources of trade, and in particular be allowed a participation in the large and increasing maritime commerce of the United States of America; that if we repealed our laws, the Americans would reciprocate. How far this is probable, Mr. Coulborn's evidence in a great measure shows. Until America had provided herself with additional ships, it is possible that British ships would be allowed to carry goods to that country, while the ships of the United States were revelling in all the luxuries of our Indian and colonial trades. Being free to choose, "Brother Jonathan" would certainly not make election of the most valueless; and, by his "go-a-head" energy and cheapness, would give us "the sack to hold" while he busily pocketed the dollars. If under the present arrangement it is a fact that "nineteenths" of the goods for America go out in American ships—and the assertion is admitted by Mr. Minturn, a gentleman fully competent to confirm it,—what warrant have we for believing that the course of trade would be changed by a repeal of the laws? I think we have no other conceivable reason for entertaining the belief than that I have pointed at, namely, that the ships of America would permit us to carry for them if we admitted them to the more beneficial employment of carrying for us. The attempt to compete with American ships has been tried, and signally failed; fine first-class ships were built by Liverpool ship-owners, who are certainly second to none as clever men of business; but the Americans took care to make it a losing

concern to them. Every order for goods was accompanied with instructions as to its mode of shipment, and neither the *Matilda*, *Sheridan*, nor *Diana* were ever by any accident named.

Mr. Coulborn stated his firm conviction that no alteration in our laws, short of a repeal of the Reciprocity Act, could wrest from the Americans any portion of their trade with this country; and that if he were to purchase the finest, fastest, and most favourite American ship, and lay her on for New York as a British ship, he would not be able to obtain for her one package of goods on American account. Upon the subject of our trade with America, and indeed upon the whole question, some valuable opinions have been offered by Sir John Gladstone, a venerable baronet, father of the Right Hon. Member for Oxford. Mr. Gladstone, to whom the letter is addressed, and whose talents are unquestionably of the highest order, unfortunately permitted his better judgment to be swayed by the specious arguments, but I trust now exploded fallacies, of the free-trade school as regards the Navigation Laws. To preserve his son from so dangerous an error as that to which his expressed opinions tended, the father undertook to point out what he conceived to be the false ground upon which the son was treading*. Mr. Coulborn also explained away the impression, that freight is a matter which enters into the price of a commodity; and, upon the whole, proved very conclusively the inexpediency of any alteration in the laws relating to navigation.

Mr. Mitchell, the honourable Member for Bridport, gave evidence in the capacity of an English merchant engaged in the trade with Russia, complaining that there was at times a deficiency of British shipping in Russia for the export of the produce of that country; and that British commerce suffered in consequence. It would be, however,

* As I think a document so important should not be lost sight of, I have had Sir John Gladstone's letter reprinted as the Appendix, E.

difficult to ascertain how far British shipping and mercantile interests would be improved by compelling shipping to resort thither, whether the trade were remunerative or not. He admitted that there was no lack of foreign shipping, and no difficulty in chartering British ships. In other respects, the evidence of this gentleman consisted of opinions and arguments of a second-hand character, derivable rather from the observations of others, than resulting from his personal experience. His tirade against the master-mariners in British employ, and his eulogy of foreigners will not, I imagine, be points in his favour when next he appears on the hustings of the maritime town of Bridport.

Mr. George Frederick Young's evidence, next to Mr. Porter's, on the other side of the question, must be looked upon as the most elaborate. Mr. Young has been distinguished for many years past as the uncompromising conservator of the rights of British shipping, both within and without the walls of Parliament. Comment upon his testimony is unnecessary, but I earnestly recommend his arguments to the careful perusal of all interested in this great national question. Mr. Young, as a shipbuilder and shipowner, may not by some be thought an unprejudiced or disinterested witness; but as there is no one portion of the commerce of this country which can safely be detached from the other, so I conceive that what affects one division must equally be prejudicial or beneficial, as the case may be, to the whole.

Mr. Joshua Wilson, a member of the Society of Friends, and moreover a shipowner upon a minor scale, and a retail and wholesale grocer at Sunderland, had one instance to adduce of what he believed to be the prejudicial operation of the Navigation Laws. A quantity of sugar having been brought to England in a foreign ship in 1846, was purchased by Mr. Wilson, with the view of reshipping it as "stores" in his own and some other ships, in which he was concerned. In

this, however, he was baulked by the Custom-house authorities. It made a difference to this gentleman of six shillings a hundred-weight—at least, so he calculates, for it is a matter of calculation after all—and, in consequence, he has kept it locked up in bond, until the total repeal of the Navigation Laws shall have swept away all distinctions between sugar brought in British and foreign ships.

“What mighty contests spring from trivial things!”

Mr. Joshua Wilson having met with this, to him, great grievance, made his appearance before the Committee, and denounced the whole code of laws as most injurious, impolitic, and unchristian! The nature of Mr. Wilson's evidence is, in some instances, so utterly at variance with the statements of other at least equally credible witnesses, that I must leave the reader to reconcile the contradictions with each other as he best can. Like the tailors of Brentford, self-magnified into “the people of England,” Mr. Joshua Wilson and one other gentleman (as we learn from Mr. Dunbar's evidence*) are the self-constituted “working classes of Sunderland.” One must believe this to be the case, from the remark embodied in the evidence of that gentleman†. Mr. Wilson's ideas quite coincide with those of Mr. Porter upon the subject of warehousing in this country, and also upon the question of our direct trade. Having an eye to his retail as well as to the success of his coasting business, Mr. Wilson is a warm advocate for small transactions between the near ports of the Continent and Sunderland. The advantage of being able to obtain a small parcel of tea, or a convenient supply of coffee from Rotterdam, Hamburg, or France‡, is not overlooked by this business-like individual; yet at the same time he would have the Committee to believe that the repeal of the Navigation Laws would occasion an increase of

* See p. 178.

† P. 140.

‡ P. 142.

goods to be warehoused in this country*. Giving Mr. Wilson full credit for his religious feelings upon this subject, it cannot be denied that he is a very shortsighted merchant if he believes it possible that a foreigner would warehouse goods for foreign consumption in this country, if he had the power to ship it in one of his own cheaply sailed vessels direct to his own country, coupled with the prospective advantage of being able to re-ship to England such portions as he had no demand for abroad.

Mr. Simey supplied the Committee with some important details respecting the comparative prices and relative expenses of sailing British and foreign shipping, and flatly denied the accuracy of Mr. Wilson's asseveration that the working classes in Sunderland were almost unanimously in favour of the repeal of the Navigation Laws. Mr. Simey referred to the numerous petitions† which had been presented as a sufficient answer to Mr. Wilson's assertion.

Mr. W. J. Hall, a wharfinger of the City of London, gave evidence in favour of the repeal. His arguments, however, are not important either one way or the other, since their only essential points are not derivable from personal knowledge or experience. In his capacity of a wharfinger there cannot be a doubt that he would be benefited by the rivers being filled with cheap foreign ships the owners of which were unwilling to incur the expense of dock dues, and his wish would appear to have been father to the opinions expressed.

Mr. Briggs, a timber merchant and ship-builder, of Sunderland, showed that the effects of the alteration in the timber duties had been very injurious to Canadian and beneficial to Baltic merchants. In common with very many other practical men he doubted the possibility of being able to compete in his trade with foreigners, and expressed his intention, in the event of the repeal taking

* See p. 137.

+ Appendix, D.

place, of sending his sons to Stettin, where timber and labour are cheap, to carry on in that country a business which could not be successfully prosecuted in this. Mr. Briggs also denied the correctness of Mr. Wilson's assertion as to the state of public feeling among the working classes in Sunderland.

The evidence of Mr. Minturn is of the utmost importance to the settlement of this question, the more so that a native American shipmaster, styled "Captain Briggs," made statements before the Committee of the House of Commons which most believed to be untrue, but the incorrectness of which was not readily susceptible of satisfactory proof. Captain Briggs stated, in reply to the question 4731, "What is the cost of building a 500-ton ship?" "The present cost of building a ship in the United States is about £.20 a ton, the average price about two years since was £.16 a ton." This important testimony to the costliness of American shipping was not lost upon that indefatigable abolitionist Mr. Ricardo, who asked (4732) "What class of vessel is that?" to which the native American replied "the class from 400 to 800 tons;" and further "it would stand A 1 for 10 years, and the other A 1 for 7 years. I take the highest price and the lowest price, and I take the mean. I do not include provisions, but every expense of outfit; two years ago it was £.16, now it is £.20 a ton." This witness also gave the Commons Committee to understand that the shipping of his country was sadly encumbered with *ad valorem* duties; that their chain cables, which they got from England, were subjected to a duty of 35 per cent.; that the canvas and sails they used were principally procured in England; and that repairs of shipping were so much more economically and satisfactorily performed in this country, that his owners were quite satisfied with the cheapness of our workmanship. This and a great deal more of the same kind of evidence, as might be supposed, created thrilling

sensations of delight among the lovers of repeal, and "the Anatomist" did not fail to expatiate in his book upon the praiseworthy and wonderful patience of our suffering Yankee neighbours, and which alone enabled them to compete successfully with the ships of England. Some misgivings, however, must have crossed the minds of the repealers, or else they considered it was advisable to "make assurance doubly sure;" for it having been named to a member of the Government that an intelligent American had recently arrived in England, an early opportunity was seized of sounding him with reference to the Navigation Law question. Mr. Minturn without hesitation avowed his free trade principles, and was accordingly looked upon as the man of all others to settle the point, and to confirm all that the native American shipmaster had so boldly asserted. But Mr. Minturn was not only a "free trader:" he added to that character the virtues of truth and integrity, and his evidence was such as to convince the party inviting him to give evidence upon the subject that he had caught "a Tartar." Mr. Minturn's statements were in entire accordance with preconceived opinions, although so diametrically opposed to the statements of Captain George Briggs that it is impossible to believe the latter to be worthy of any reliance whatever. Mr. Minturn furnished the Committee with the cost of the New York packets, which are well known to be intrinsically as valuable as British ships of the 12 A 1 letter. Those magnificent ships the *Sir Robert Peel* and the *Devonshire*, which carry the heaviest descriptions of goods with speed and safety, were built and equipped in all respects for sea, exclusive of the saloon, at £.14 or a trifle more per ton of our old measurement. The canvas of which their sails were made was never in England until brought to it upon their yards, and it is moreover stated by Mr. Minturn that in the course of a very short time not only the manufactured iron and copper, but canvas,

anchors, cables, and every article required for ship-building, including hemp and other raw material, will be available in America. The cheaper description of ships, which the native American Captain induced his credulous listeners to believe would cost £.16 a ton, Mr. Minturn stated at from £.11 10s. to £.12.

Mr. Wigram's evidence showed the difference of cost, and the profit derivable from British and American ships respectively. It is well known that Mr. Wigram builds some of the best, and, therefore, according to Mr. Porter's maxim, the cheapest, merchant ships afloat; but that gentleman declared his inability to compete with foreigners without the protection at present existing. American ships are sailed with fully one-third less men, and, from the difference in the first cost, and other advantages, Mr. Wigram calculated that, whereas the British ship would take eight years and a half to return the capital embarked, the other would do it in five years. Some important data are given respecting our lost whale fisheries, and a strong opinion as to the injury which would accrue to ship-building in this country were the Navigation Laws to be repealed. This gentleman condemned the Bill introduced by Mr. Labouchere* as a half-measure, which would have a more ruinous effect than the total repeal, inasmuch as his Bill reserves the coasting trade, and is to enforce the employment of British seamen in the same proportion of three-fourths. Mr. Wigram's observations are fully corroborated in this and in other respects by Mr. Young, and many other intelligent practical men.

Having now exhausted the malcontents upon the general question, whose united evidence I think furnishes very strong testimony in favour of the laws as they now exist, I arrive at the evidence given by Mr. Tindall, who set out by showing how cheaply he could build ships at Scarborough,

* Appendix, A.

and yet how much a Prussian could undersell him. He described the difference of expense in materials here and in Prussia, and the impossibility of successful competition under existing circumstances. Mr. Tindall exemplified the mode in which the carriage of the produce of our Eastern possessions would steal from us were we to commit so suicidal an act as to repeal existing prohibitions, and exposed the absurdity of the threat which has been made on behalf of Prussia, as to the recall of the Reciprocity Treaties. Mr. Younghusband, a shipowner and insurance broker of Liverpool, who from boyhood has been connected with the shipping trade, corroborated the evidence of Mr. Coulborn, as to the impossibility of obtaining freight in British ships for America, and foretold that if the trade to India and China were opened, the Americans would to a certainty drive our ships out of the trade. Mr. Anderson, of South Shields, argued on the same side, and, with reference to the threat of Prussia, regretted that Reciprocity Treaties had ever been entered into. Mr. Dunbar, a merchant and an extensive shipowner, engaged in trade with all parts of the world, reiterated his firm and unalterable opinion as to the inexpediency of repealing or of weakening the Navigation Laws, which opinion he had given before the Commons Committee. It having been asserted by the abolitionists that there had been a want of tonnage in Australia, and also that our competition with foreign ships in foreign ports had been successful, Mr. Dunbar produced tables to show the comparative paucity of our trade between Rio de Janeiro and foreign countries, and the fact that during the period in which a want of shipping had been complained of in Australia, British ships in great numbers had left the ports in question in ballast. He explained the reasons which might have operated to cause a quantity of copper ore to remain at Port Adelaide for want of shipping, and left it to be inferred from thence that the Navigation Laws had been

wholly guiltless upon the occasion. Mr. Dunbar complained, and with apparent justice, of the present mode of measuring ships, a grievance which it is hoped will be attended to and rectified. Mr. Horsley Palmer, an Indian and China merchant, gave evidence to the effect that in his business the Navigation Laws had presented no obstruction; and appeared to believe that the Americans, by their cheaper ships, would compete with British ships in the China trade. Mr. Robertson gave evidence to the same effect, and, in addition, stated the probability of Swedish ships bringing cargoes of tea to this country, if they were rendered admissible for home consumption.

The next eleven witnesses, according to the order in which I have placed them, gave evidence against throwing open the carrying trade of our West India islands to foreign competition. Those gentlemen, though resident at different parts of England, and one among them, Mr. Geddes, a planter from Jamaica, concurred in stating that the present system of sending supplies from England to the islands, and of getting the produce home, was the most efficient and economical that could under any circumstances be looked for; and that the insurance arrangements now in force would be wholly vitiated, and the West India merchants and planters left in a much more deplorable plight than they are at present were the proposed repeal to take place.

The petitions, so well timed and well managed by Government influence in the different islands, were declared to be wholly fallacious, and that the best construction which could be put upon their statements, that is, presuming them to have in reality emanated from parties *bonâ fide* interested in the matter, was, that they were the exclamations of desperate men catching with avidity at any hope, however shadowy. One of the eleven witnesses, Mr. Hankey, it should be stated, avowed himself a free-trader in shipping as in everything else, yet doubted whether any benefit

would accrue from the repeal of the Navigation Laws, either in the West India, or trade generally; and confessed that he had never in the course of his business transactions felt any inconvenience from the restrictions attaching to them.

Mr. Brooks, a merchant engaged in the Australian trade, described the Navigation Laws as upon the whole very beneficial. He explained the smallness of the sum now paid as freight upon wool, from which it was made apparent that no appreciable reduction in the price of the raw material, much less upon the manufactured article, could result from competition; on the contrary, he stated his belief that the occasional influx of shipping would tend to embarrass merchants. Mr. Brooks confirmed the observations made by Mr. Dunbar as to the groundlessness of the complaint of want of shipping to bring home wool and copper ore from Australia. Mr. Gore, a merchant engaged in the trade to New South Wales, briefly stated that he was wholly unaware of having been injured by the Navigation Laws; that they had never interfered with him; that he had never heard of Mr. Samuel Browning, who gave evidence before the Committee of the House of Commons upon this subject, and that that person was unknown as a partner in the house of Boyd, Brothers, and Company, with which he (Mr. Gore) was acquainted.

The evidence of Mr. Parbury and Mr. Charles Enderby contains some interesting particulars respecting the whale fisheries. The latter gentleman, in particular, whose father is considered to have been the originator of the South Sea whale fishery, described the decline and fall of that once lucrative trade, in which many of our bravest seamen and officers were taught to endure toil and meet danger. It is sad to reflect upon the evils which have followed upon legislative meddling on the part of statesmen unacquainted with the real merits of the question, and gleaning their information

from bigoted officials or interested schemers. The Messrs. Enderby have lately become the grantees of the Auckland Islands, upon which it is their intention to establish fishing stations, and from whence they expect to carry on a beneficial trade. But, pending the discussion upon the Navigation Laws, these gentlemen have very prudently deferred giving orders for building the ships they will require in England, under the impression that if foreign ships are admitted to the privileges of British register, they will find it more to their advantage to build the ships they require abroad, and also to navigate them wholly with foreigners. It is not to be expected that Messrs. Enderby, or any other merchants, can afford to be so extremely patriotic as to persist to their own ruin, in the employment of dear ships and expensive sailors, when by so doing they are to reap not the slightest return in the shape of protection.

Mr. Hunter's evidence is very important as regarding the Mauritius trade, and unless that gentleman is labouring under some extraordinary and unaccountable hallucination, the effects of the repeal of the Navigation Laws would be, if not fatal, at least very injurious, to the shipping arrangements of that productive colony. Mr. Gibb and Mr. Scott, merchants connected with China, explained the difficulties with which British shipping in China has now to contend, and demonstrated the feasibility of the Americans obtaining possession of a considerable share of our direct and inter-colonial trade, should the proposed relaxation of the law be conceded to them. The uniform testimony borne by these gentlemen, and indeed by all others of every denomination, to the moderate sums paid for freight in British ships, and the sufficient supply of tonnage, forms an important item in favour of the laws as they now exist.

The evidence of Mr. Dowie, and of Mr. Gillespie, will be found rather conflicting. The former gentleman is a Quebec merchant, and is an advocate for protection; the latter

connected with Montreal, and in favour of free trade in shipping, but in very little else. He, in common with his connections in Montreal, has felt the effects of the repeal of the Corn Laws, and now seeks, what he believes can alone help him to carry on his mercantile operations successfully, the inducement of free navigation to Americans and others to ascend the St. Lawrence in greater numbers.

Mr. Gray, a London merchant, gave very clear evidence upon the question in all its bearings. His views and opinions are in entire accordance with those entertained by the conservative party generally. He explained away the fallacious supposition, that the repeal of the Navigation Laws would occasion the slightest benefit to the consumer by cheapening freights; and showed the extreme jeopardy in which our warehousing business would thereby be placed.

Mr. Whitwill and Mr. Richmond betray in their evidence a warmth of feeling which is certainly not unbecoming British seamen who have spent some of their best days in the maritime service. Mr. Richmond's evidence is enriched by a number of elaborate and important tables.

Mr. Mitchell, a merchant and shipowner of Leith, supplied a mass of important facts relative to cheap shipbuilding at the northern ports of the Continent; and also with reference to the relative expenses of sailing British and foreign ships of the same size and description. He objected strongly to the timber duties, and showed the injurious effects of the Reciprocity Treaties as exemplified in the Scotch ports, with which he is more particularly acquainted.

DEDUCTIONS.

UPON a careful review of the case, both for and against the Navigation Laws, and with particular reference to the Bill introduced by Mr. Labouchere for their amendment, I think that upon commercial grounds alone any such alteration would, to say the least of it, be most unwise. The further consideration—National Defence—I have reserved for the concluding division of this work; for I look upon the commercial bearing of the question to be paramount. Well supplied with the sinew of war—money—it might be possible to frame a more expensive but more cumbrous system to feed our Royal Navy, and to protect commerce and the country; but with our monetary resources crippled, it would not be within the bounds of possibility to sustain the increased pressure of war.

England had at one time the great bulk of the commerce of the whole world under her control. She relinquished, by seemingly unimportant instalments, many of those advantages obtained at an enormous cost, and now finds rivals in various quarters, waiting for further concessions, in order to enable them to beat her out of her own field. Bad legislation wrested from our hands the whale fishery; Reciprocity laws have deprived us of a lucrative trade in the Baltic; and our traffic with the United States of America, though great upon paper, in reality amounts to

the merest trifle. But to descend from generalities to particulars, let us see how Mr. Labouchere's Bill for the repeal of the Navigation Laws would operate upon our

TRADE WITH INDIA.

The direct trade with our Indian possessions forms the most valuable source of our foreign commerce. Since the termination of the East India Company's Charter, in 1834-5, the tonnage trading to Calcutta alone has increased from about 153,000 to 320,000 tons, while foreign shipping does not amount to more than 34,000 tons in all; and I think, although the restrictions of the double port duties levied upon foreign ships may have operated to prevent the spread of foreign trade to some extent, yet there cannot be a reasonable doubt that the third rule in the Navigation Act has been the actual cause of the paucity of their trade with this important possession. England being the great consuming country of the produce of her Eastern territories, it has not been worth the while of foreigners to trade thither, because the goods they might have brought home would not have been admitted for consumption in this country; but if the restriction were to be withdrawn, abundant and most conclusive evidence has been adduced to show the probability, almost amounting to a certainty, of British ships being ultimately beaten out of the trade. There is also another most weighty consideration not attaching solely to the East India trade, but applying with equal force to our colonies generally. The constant presence of English ships and British officers and seamen at our colonial possessions, tends to keep in mind and to strengthen the tie by which our expatriated countrymen, the colonists, are bound to us. If, therefore, the colonial carrying trade were to be diverted from its present channels, those associations would be lessened in force; and proportionally as this reduction of British shipping took place, the feeling

towards Old England would be diminished; until at length the land of their birth would be almost obliterated from their minds, and a decay of loyalty and affection ensue as a necessary consequence.

THE CHINA TRADE,

which England fought for single-handed, and obtained, would be rendered unprofitable to her, were the Navigation Laws repealed. American ships would either go from the United States direct to India and China, with the produce of their own country, and ship teas for England; or else would bring cotton to this country, take in a cargo for China at any price, and there ship teas for the most promising market, wherever that might chance to be—whether America, England, or Sydney. British ships, unable to compete with the cheaper built, cheaper sailed Americans, must succumb; and our merchants would decline to contend with people equally with themselves energetic and alive to business, and engaged in a race in which they are unencumbered, while the Englishman is greatly overloaded with debt and taxes. China would be virtually reclosed against us, to our inexpressible chagrin and grievous loss. The coasting or opium trade is now in the hands of all nations, but it is of a character too lawless to be affected by any legislative enactments, whether restrictive or otherwise.

THE AUSTRALIAN TRADE

may in a few years, if duly nurtured, become most lucrative and important to this country. The supply of British shipping has ever been (with the one exception of 1847) ample for the trade of Sydney, Port Philip, Van Diemen's Land, South Australia, Port Adelaide, &c., and neither the merchants connected therewith nor the colonists as a body desire a change. A continent so extensive as that of Australasia is of too much moment to be trifled with. Duly

tended and succoured, our fellow-countrymen in that hemisphere may afford a profitable source of employment for the overgrown population of the mother-country, and yield a three-fold return for the care and assistance we may bestow upon them. But by rendering the communication between the two countries less frequent, we may ultimately break the link by which mutual interests are now united.

BRITISH WEST INDIES.

Already legislative enactments press with dire severity upon West Indian property. Once rich and prosperous men are now drawn to the brink of penury, and many, alas! are already engulfed in its depths. Let us not add to their miseries by destroying the slender twig upon which their dependence now rests. By demolishing the protection afforded by the Navigation Laws, foreigners would not only bring home what small quantity of produce might still chance to be grown in the British West Indies, but they would be enabled to glut the sugar markets with the produce of Cuba and Brazil, until every other description were thrown out of cultivation. Neither East Indian nor Mauritius sugar could compete with that grown by slave labour in Cuba and the Brazils. In that case the British public would learn to its cost that an indestructible monopoly had been created, and would find itself at the tender mercy of slave factors, with whom competition by unprotected free labour would be a matter of impossibility.

THE MAURITIUS.

There appears no reason whatever for opening the Mauritius trade upon the score of want of moderate-priced shipping. The chief security planters in that island have for a steady supply of freight consists in the law as it now stands, and the abrogation of which would render supplies fluctuating and uncertain, without being more economical.

THE CANADAS.

There seems a diversity of interests in the Canadas which can hardly be reconciled. The people of Montreal, at the top of the St. Lawrence, are in favour of repeal, while those of Quebec, which is lower down the river, are for protection. It is scarcely possible to abolish restrictions in one case and to retain them in the other, and it would be most unfair to form new laws of a retrospective character. The people at Montreal by settling there made themselves liable to the evil as well as to the good resulting from their location, and it would be manifestly unjust to relax laws simply for their pleasure which are beneficial to their neighbours. The unavoidably heavy expenses of navigating the St. Lawrence above Quebec are such, that it may be doubted whether the repeal of the Navigation Laws would have the slightest effect in inducing a greater number of ships to ascend to Montreal.

THE UNITED STATES.

If we repeal the Navigation Laws we shall admit into direct, but unequal competition, as far as this country is concerned, a people to whom business is as meat and drink, the object of whose most devout worship is comprised in dollars and cents, and whose ambition is only controlled by the all engrossing consideration of money. Richly endued with the most consummate art, by which they have hitherto been able to blind and juggle "Britishers" to any imaginable extent, they wait until we destroy the protection we enjoy from the Navigation Laws when they will rob us of our colonial trade and, ultimately, of our colonies also. They will then throw off the mask and work our certain ruin.

Our most valuable sailors now find protection and employment under their flag, and a few years of the free-trade system would also put them in possession of the

best of our ships, which they had purchased at their own price. We might for a time be induced to believe that we were receiving an equivalent, (we could never hope for more,) in exchange for the trade we should open to them, but it would be found ultimately that this was only a lure to entice us within the range of a well-laid ambuscade, and "check-mate" would be the unexpected but inevitable end of the game. The delusion would only be made apparent when it was too late for us to retrace our steps. Conclusive evidence has been adduced to show that the Americans build, man, provision, and sail their ships more advantageously than we can ever hope to do. Their maritime laws, like the laws in the Southern States, are to the last degree *vigorous*. If an "unbroken*" British sailor finds himself, whether as a passenger or as one who has signed articles, on board an American ship and refuses to work, it is enough to warrant the infliction of the severest corporal punishment. I know not that such is the written law; but it is the invariable practice: the fact is too notorious to be the subject of controversy. Punishments which are hardly tolerated by a British public when inflicted under responsible surveillance, are permitted to exist in the marine of that mis-called land of liberty without the slightest kind of compunction. An appeal to the law in America by a lacerated sailor is of no avail if the admission be made that he refused to work. There can be no question that the effect of this arbitrary power is such as to deter men from skulking, and to exact the full modicum of labour from each individual on board the ship; but if our humanity shudders at empowering British captains to resort to equally stringent measures, how can ships sailed under the British flag be expected to compete with those, cheaper in every respect, displaying the stripes and stars of

* Captain Briggs, in his evidence before the House of Commons, says he prefers British seamen to any other "after they are broken in."

our Transatlantic rivals ? The Americans evinced no compunction when narrowing the confines of the red aborigines of their soil, neither will they hesitate to clip the mane, draw the teeth, and dock the tail of the British lion if ever the power to do so is within their reach. Already the tonnage of their mercantile navy equals our own ; and the secretary to their treasury estimates that in 1857 it will have doubled its present extent. And the prediction will be fulfilled if we are only good enough to repeal our Navigation Laws.

THE BALTIC.

For a series of years prior to 1824 the trade between Great Britain and the Ports of the Baltic was considerable. The trade was then protected by an alien duty, and by the additional pilotage, light, and dock dues which were levied upon ships of those countries, but which amounted to little, if any, more than a set-off against the lastage duty and other imposts payable by British ships in those ports. The Reciprocity Act, inasmuch as it enabled Prussians, Danes, Swedes, and Norwegians to come into direct competition upon the same terms with the dearer ships of England, naturally occasioned a depression among the latter, and a corresponding elevation of the former. The amount of trade remains pretty much the same*, the difference being that whereas it was formerly carried on in British ships, it is now done by the ships of those countries. By repealing the Navigation Laws according to the Labouchere plan, the shipowners of those countries would, without doubt, enter as largely as the Americans would allow them into our colonial trade ; consequently we should in this case also be extremely liberal to those nations without being just to ourselves.

* In 1824 the trade between England and Prussia amounted to 256,285 tons, and in 1845 to no more than 305,945 tons. The trade between Sweden and Norway and Great Britain in 1824 amounted to 203,857 tons, and in 1845 had only increased to 230,292 tons. See p. 97, *ante*.

RUSSIA.

The trade with Russia is almost wholly one of import to this country, and although the consequence of extending any greater indulgence than that given in our Reciprocity Treaty of 1843 might not be injurious to Great Britain it appears wholly unnecessary to interfere with present arrangements, and the more so as the ships of Russian Finland are gradually on the increase, and will soon be equal to the conveyance of any produce now requiring tonnage. It is not probable that the Russians, while they remain in their present condition of serfdom, can ever enter largely into any foreign trade, if the opportunity be offered ; and while they are enabled to obtain the produce of China as they now do, overland, it is not likely that we should obtain any accession to our carrying trade by an increase in our trade with Russia.

THE UNITED NETHERLANDS.

The benefit to Holland by abolishing the Navigation Laws would be two-fold ; first, it would open our India and colonial trade to the ships of that country, and, secondly, cause a considerable increase to the warehousing at her shipping ports. In return for this double benefit Holland has only the power to grant us a share in her now exclusive trade with Java. It is not difficult, therefore, to arrive at the conclusion that the transaction would be very one-sided, and that we should be directly reversing the old saw —“ throw a sprat to catch a mackerel.”

FRANCE

Has nothing to give us in return for any facility and advantage we might afford to her shipping. Our trade, although very considerable in 1846 (according to Mr. Porter's figures), consisted chiefly in cargoes of ladies and gentlemen, with heavy purses, well-stuffed trunks, portmanteaus, carpet-bags, &c., and the return freights com-

prised the self-same ladies and gentlemen, with attenuated money-bags, and worn-out letters of credit. If it happened that their trunks, &c., weighed equally heavy, and represented the same amount of "cargo," they were often lined with commodities which never did and never were intended to contribute anything to the British exchequer.

THE MEDITERRANEAN.

The ports of this sea being at present classed by Mr. Porter under the head of "unprotected trade" need no further freedom, and therefore furnish no imaginable cause for the repeal of the Navigation Laws.

SOUTH AMERICA.

Our trade with the ports on the south-east coast of South America has for some years past been gradually declining, in consequence of foreign competition. The trade for slave-grown sugar with Brazil would undoubtedly receive a powerful impetus from the removal of those restrictions upon shipping which now compel the merchants to ship so much of their commodity as they intend for consumption in England in vessels of this country. Having, however, expended I am afraid to say how many millions in attempting to abolish negro slavery, it would not be very consistent, any more than it would be expedient, to give such a welcome bonus to dealers in human flesh, and whose inhuman traffic it has for so many years been our custom to denounce.

FOREIGN WEST INDIES.

The arguments I have used with respect to Brazil apply in most respects to the Foreign West Indies, but particularly to those, for instance Cuba, in which slave labour is exclusively employed.

THE WHALE FISHERY

Is to all appearance defunct, and we are informed by the

most skilful practitioners that there remains no prospect of our being able to restore animation to it. It would therefore be useless to legislate upon a branch of trade which may now be considered obsolete.

This is one victim to unequal and ill-considered legislation, and demonstrates the too certain result of placing British ships in undue competition with those of foreign nations.

BRITISH AND FOREIGN SHIPBUILDING.

Most, if not all, the shipowners and capitalists of this country, are under the guidance of the celebrated *maxim*—“Buy in the cheapest market—sell in the dearest.” Every man who has money to speculate with, and wit to turn it to good account, endeavours to follow up the principle; and, as Mr. Godeffroy told the Lords’ Committee, “he would be a very bad merchant who did not do so.” If the Bill introduced by Mr. Labouchere were to become the law of the land, a ship entitled to the privileges of British register might be built in any part of the world; and, as a natural consequence, every man intending to build or purchase a ship, would look about him for the “cheapest market.” It is against reason to suppose that he would find that in England. There are ships built in Sunderland, and other English and Scotch ports, which, like Hodge’s razors, “are made to sell;” but for a good ship, honestly built, and all the materials paid for, a much higher price must be obtained. Mr. Wigram’s ships, for instance, cost £.25 a ton; Mr. Young’s ships, £.22; Liverpool ships, £.23; Whitehaven ships, £.21; and Mr. Tindall’s Scarborough-built ships, which he declares to be as cheap as good ships can be built in England, cost £.17 10s. per ton, without copper sheathing. According to the evidence of Mr. Simey, good ships cannot be built at Sunderland for much less money; and, upon the whole, we may strike an average of £.20 as the cost per ton of the higher class of British-built shipping.

Even Mr. Joshua Wilson's ship (the only one, by the way, with the cost of which he was personally acquainted—for the *Buchanan* was a second-hand affair altogether), the *Hendon*, a ship of 218 tons, old measurement, is admitted by him to have cost £.2626, or upwards of £.12 a ton; and that for an 8 A 1 ship. Now, Mr. Godeffroy supplied the Committee of the House of Lords with an account of a ship of 503 tons, bearing his name, the *Godeffroy*. This ship is described as copper-fastened and sheathed, and to have cost him £.11 11s. 6d. per British register ton. Mr. Minturn told the Committee, that the ships of the New York lines of packets, which are all fine first-class ships, or it would be quite impossible for them to encounter the tempestuous voyages and heavy work to which they are constantly exposed, cost £.14 a ton (perhaps £.15 coppered); and we have the evidence of Mr. Younghusband, who gave it from the unquestionable authority of the shipbuilders' books, that a Lubec-built ship, also intended for a New York packet ship, was equipped for sea for less than £.11 a ton. According to the material employed, so without doubt the price in either country might be brought much lower; but I confine myself to the best description of foreign-built and British-built ships. Lloyd's classification is no real criterion of the value of shipping. It is possible that some national feeling may have given rise to the underrating of foreign ships, and may have obtained a better character for British-built ships than, in strict justice, they deserve. This appears to be the opinion of the Americans, inasmuch as they will not allow their ships to be classed on Lloyd's books at all. These being the facts of the case, is it at all probable that any British merchant who respects the old mercantile axiom, will build a ship in England, when he can obtain one at the cheaper market, and which will answer his purpose equally well, at a reduction of *full 20 per cent*?

The framers of Mr. Labouchere's Bill, however, have anticipated the probability of British capitalists finding it to their advantage to employ foreign shipping, and have, therefore, provided for their exercising that discretion. Mr. Porter has "no objection" to our shipowners building ships abroad, and his *confrères* have also nodded assent to the free-trade dictum; but what, in that case, is to become of British shipwrights, caulkers, joiners, block, pump, and mast makers, riggers, sail-makers, and all the host of men, women, and children, supported directly or indirectly by the shipping now built and outfitted in this country*? Blackwall, Limehouse, and Wapping will exist only in name, and the whole crew now inhabiting those localities must be shipped off to Prussia or to America, there to re-engage, if they can, with their present employers. This is no highly-varnished picture of events, which will as surely come to pass as that the Navigation Laws are abrogated.

BRITISH AND FOREIGN SEAMEN.

Unless English shipmasters are empowered by law to "handspike" or flog their sailors, and to exercise any similar gently persuasive eloquence which they may feel disposed, they must forego British sailors. But Mr. Labouchere's new law that is to be says "No, you must continue to man your ship as heretofore;" consequently, the British ship-owner would be obliged, in order to save himself from ruin, to sail his ship under the flag of some other nation more favoured than his own. In that case he would make arrangements for shipping a crew in Sweden, Denmark, or Prussia. The arguments in support of this deduction are so clearly set forth in the evidence of Mr. Young, Mr. Wigram, Mr. Enderby, and other men capable of forming an accurate judgment, that I do not look upon it as a proceeding in the slightest degree problematical.

* See p. 135.

THE APPRENTICESHIP CLAUSE,

If abolished, would be satisfactory to many shipowners who now think it a hardship, and would not to any great extent diminish the rising generation of sailors. We have it clearly in evidence, that if not compulsory upon shipowners, perhaps the larger proportion would still take an equal number; and whether apprentices or boys not apprenticed, would matter little to the country, in a national point of view. In time of war shipowners would have apprentices for their own sakes, because those under indenture are not liable to impressment. The evil appears to be, that the clause presses unequally upon shipowners in different trades. To many it is not a consideration, but to others it is; and as we find from Mr. Brown's evidence, that the number of apprentices employed exceeds that required by law to the extent of 10,000, I think its continuance a matter for consideration.

BRITISH AND FOREIGN CAPTAINS.

There is such an irreconcileable diversity of opinions upon the relative qualities of master-mariners, British and foreign, that one is at a loss for a clue to unravel the mystery. I imagine, however, that the truth will be found to lie between the extremes, and that master-mariners of both countries are neither so bad nor so good as they have been represented. But enough has been shown to demonstrate the propriety of mates of ships undergoing an examination prior to being trusted as masters. This should be a statutory regulation, and not as it is now, in a great degree, a voluntary one. It would be unfair to compel a master who has for many years conducted a ship across the ocean to undergo a schoolboy's examination; but before a mate obtains promotion, a certificate from the examiner should be a *sine qua non*.

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“ TEMPERANCE SHIPS

Are such only at sea,” says Mr. Wigram ; and this appears to be very nearly the statement of the whole case. But as it is of great importance in every point of view that sailors should learn and practise temperance in its truest sense, it would be desirable to lead, rather than force, them to abstain from spirituous liquors. If masters of ships had the power to issue liberally an additional quantity of tea and sugar to those men willing to take it in lieu of spirits, it is probable that a natural relish for temperate drinks would in time supersede the necessity for total abstinence. But under the present system the sailor, in nine cases out of ten, when he steps over the side of a temperance ship, leaves his temperance principles behind him, and forthwith rushes into the contrary extreme of riot and drunkenness. This would not be so were the habit of temperance once deliberately formed—men would have a better estimate of the value of money, and be more alive to the sterling virtue of sobriety. Every ship might take a certain quantity of spirits, but with the understanding that those men who did not take up their allowance should find it to their advantage. This, and a good example on the part of the captain and officers, would do more towards making temperance sailors than all the temperance ships and temperance boarding-houses in the world.

WAREHOUSING.

The repeal of the Navigation Laws would either change the system of warehousing in this country for the better or the worse. It is most unlikely that a revolution so important in the carrying trade should not have some effect upon the depositing of goods in this country. Goods intended for foreign markets, which now come in large quantities to this country to be placed in our bonding warehouses, would, there seems scarcely any doubt, be

sent direct to the Continent ; and it is probable, also, that much of the produce of distant countries would also be landed at Rotterdam and other cheap and convenient ports, with the view to supply retail dealers in this country. The possibility of the change being beneficial to us is in the highest degree questionable, while the certainty of its being most injurious appears to stare us in the face.

INSURANCE.

If British were displaced by foreign ships the revenue would undoubtedly suffer by the withdrawal of a considerable part of the stamp duty now paid upon policies of marine insurance. The system of insuring by "ship or ships" would be completely at an end, and it is only reasonable to conjecture that a great deal of the insurance business now transacted in this country would be removed to the offices of rival foreigners. The amount of duty which now finds its way into the public exchequer, and which must be considerable, has not been stated ; but whatever it is, it would be so much dead loss to this country. By insuring ships abroad the policy duty would be evaded altogether, and if British capitalists and others found it to their interest to form upon the Continent branch establishments, to be upheld by their capital, there are possibly other commercial documents as well as policies of marine insurance, now encumbered by stamps and taxes, which might with perfect safety to the transaction be carried thither also. This appears a natural sequence.

THE COST OF FREIGHTS

Never in any sensible degree comes before the consumer. Prices of commodities are affected by the state of the markets, and whether the goods are brought to that market at the rate of £.10 or £.5 a ton is a matter of which

the purchaser takes no heed. The price of an article in this country is regulated by supply and demand, and by almost any other contingency than that of the freight paid on its transmission. And further, it is most clearly shown with respect to sugar, rice, cotton, or wool, four of the most bulky commodities brought to this market, that the reduction which could possibly accrue from cheapening the rate of transit would be so insignificant that the retail dealer would appropriate it to his own particular profit rather than trouble his customers with sixteenths, octaves, or other minute fractions of a penny. In foreign growing countries cheap freights enable native merchants to obtain a higher price for the produce of which they have to dispose, and, on the contrary, when shipping is scarce and freights high, merchants lower their prices in order to effect a sale.

I do not think there remains one other point of sufficient importance to be dwelt upon, and if the reader agrees with the untaught author and compiler of the foregoing pages he will confess that not one good reason exists for the demolition of the long-tried bulwark of our colonies and commerce formed by the Navigation Laws. Those laws were left to us as a legacy by our ancestors. Those ancestors have been sneered at by millionaires and interested foreigners, and speculative theorists have joined in deriding this proof of their ironically termed "wisdom," but I devoutly hope, and I am sure I shall be joined by all right-thinking Britons, in the aspiration that succeeding generations may have equal cause to laud and admire the wisdom of those senators who, under our present most gracious Queen Victoria, may dispense the laws of this now favoured land.

THE NAVIGATION LAWS

OF

GREAT BRITAIN,

PRACTICALLY CONSIDERED,

WITH REFERENCE TO NATIONAL DEFENCE.

THE valuable evidence given by officers of distinction in the Royal Navy, of which noble profession I can only claim to be a disabled and humble member, would seem to render it presumptuous for me to intrude one remark of my own. Admiral Sir Thomas Byam Martin, G.C.B., whose evidence commences this division of the subject, has had opportunities of learning more of the detail of the naval service than perhaps any other officer now in existence. As the Controller of the Navy Board he had facilities for becoming intimately connected with the machinery of the dockyards, and in his position of a very active officer afloat he could not avoid being cognisant of the mode in which ships were manned. Had there existed any reason or necessity Sir Byam Martin's opinions with respect to manning the Royal Navy, as to the great dependence which that service must ever place upon the reserve formed by the mercantile navy, would have been corroborated by hundreds of officers of the former service; and, on the other hand, I think few could have been obtained to echo many of the sentiments of Sir James Stirling. An opinion prevails that Sir James Stirling had no intention, when

giving his evidence before the Committee of the House of Commons, to undervalue the mercantile navy as a reserve, and that his sole object was to increase the independent resources of the royal service. The opening Sir James thus incautiously afforded to the repeal party was not lost, but the course adopted was neither calculated to produce a benefit to the country, nor to redound to the professional reputation of the officer so unmercifully gibbeted to serve a party purpose. Upon one point only will I venture a few brief observations, which is with reference to a matter with which I am personally acquainted, and which may at least serve to show that the Royal and mercantile navies have in fact a very close connection with each other. In the year 1831 an inquiry was instituted respecting the number of pensioners in Greenwich Hospital who had been in the merchant as well as the Royal Navy, and it was found that no less than 1121 out of the complement of 2700 had served upon an average 13 years in merchants' employ. I have recently instituted a similar inquiry, and find that out of 2487 men, there are 568 who first went to sea in the merchant service; 515 who entered it after serving in the Royal Navy; and only 863, including of course domestics, tradesmen, &c., who served exclusively in the latter. The remainder were marines.

Sir Thomas Byam Martin, G.C.B., Admiral of the Red Squadron, and Vice-Admiral of the United Kingdom, stated:—

“I was sixteen years Controller of the Navy, which gave me an opportunity of obtaining a good deal of information on dockyard matters, and also respecting private shipping operations of the kingdom. The Navigation Laws, as I have understood, were designed for protection and encouragement to British shipping and British seamen; and I have been accustomed to think they have had that effect. They also give encouragement to another very important class in this country, one upon which its safety, as an independent State, in my opinion very much depends—I mean the British shipwrights;

and if any change were to take place calculated to diminish that class of artificer the consequences might be most disastrous should this country be again involved in war. The Navigation Laws also give encouragement to the British shipowner, by affording him exclusive advantages in the colonial and coasting trade; which he regards as a compensation for the obligation he is under to build his ships in some part of the Queen's dominions, and of employing a certain number of apprentices; and if manufacturers or others do really feel that the Navigation Laws in any degree cramp their commercial enterprise, they also ought to be content to yield a something to uphold a service to which they all owe their protection and safety. The Navigation Laws give protection to British seamen, by securing to them employment in a calling for which they qualify themselves by a long and severe apprenticeship.

"I understand that four main objects are held out to the shipowner to afford him a hope of satisfactory competition with the cheap carriers of other countries. First, he will be at liberty to build his ships in cheap foreign countries. Secondly, to take foreign seamen without limitation as to numbers; but this I am told Her Majesty's Government have given up, but as this country is infested with a set of people who are ever at work to mislead public opinion upon matters of great national interest, I will beg permission to say a few words by and by on that point, lest the subject should again be agitated and pressed upon the attention of Parliament. I ought to have remarked that there are other classes also dependent in a great degree upon the Navigation Laws: I mean the anchor-smiths, rope-makers, sail-makers, &c., all of whose trades will prosper or decline just in proportion to the amount of shipbuilding in this country. The third advantage is, that he is no longer to be compelled to take apprentices. And, fourthly, his men are no longer to be liable to impressment. These are the only four points upon which I can speak, for I know very little of the mercantile part of the question, and neither of these points can be conceded without damage to the public service.

"If the abrogation of the Navigation Laws leaves the shipowner at liberty to build his ships in foreign countries, and he avails himself of the licence, it must inevitably diminish the shipwright class in this kingdom. During the late war, we had 800 pendants flying, and 900 ships were in commission for a considerable time. With such facts as to past times, and such unmistakeable signs of what may be the demand for naval exertion hereafter, it is of vast importance that we should guard against any risk of diminishing the shipwright class. But for the extraordinary efforts of the shipwrights in the last war we never could have gone through it with the success which marked our naval operations in all quarters of the globe. There were captured during the war, 156 sail of the line, 382 large frigates, 662 corvettes, and in all 2506 vessels of war;

but the year 1814 found us at the utmost stretch of exertion to keep up fleets adequate to the protection of our colonies and commerce, and to keep pace with the quickly renovated and increasing fleet of the French. The number of shipwrights in the King's yards throughout the war may be taken at an average of 3714, and 875 apprentices, making a total of 4589 working shipwrights, besides 550 in the colonial yards. Notwithstanding this great muster of shipwright strength, and the efforts exacted from them, the Admiralty was obliged to seek every possible assistance from the private shipbuilders. The first ship of the line built by contract was in 1755, when Messrs. Wells built the *Elizabeth* of 74 guns; and since that time private shipbuilders contributed greatly to the public wants. They built and repaired (chiefly in the last war) 93 line-of-battle ships, and 466 frigates and smaller vessels, making a total of 559 vessels of war. Now, if the Navigation Laws had been abolished prior to the time of which I am speaking, and shipowners had been in the habit of building abroad, what might have been the fate of this country from insufficient shipwright strength? In the late war Buonaparte had nearly the whole sea-front of the Continent at his command, and he took full advantage of it to increase his fleet; he had, as building ports, Venice, Genoa, Toulon, Rochefort, L'Orient, Cherbourg, Antwerp, and in effect all the ports of Holland. I had an opportunity to witness the great capability of Antwerp as a building port, having been sent there under the orders of Lord Castlereagh, to carry into execution the 15th article of the treaty of peace relating to the division of the Dutch and French ships and naval property; and I was astonished to find at that *one* port 13 sail of the line on the slips, and some frigates; 19 sail of the line and 10 frigates having been previously launched there. What has happened may happen again; it therefore behoves this country to touch with great caution a law which, for a long series of years, has proved so eminently calculated to uphold our naval strength. The Dutch were once powerful at sea; often gallantly contended with us, and sometimes successfully; but after the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713 they became careless about their navy, and have ever since been insignificant on the ocean. I call this circumstance to remembrance, because it seems to admonish us not to be careless about our Navigation Laws, lest we also should become insignificant at sea. The importance of the shipwright class deserves to be long, very long, and seriously considered, before any step be taken that can by possibility hazard a diminution of shipwright work in this kingdom. I remember that there was at one time a very strong feeling of insubordination on the part of the shipwrights in the dockyards, which proceeded to a very great extent; but such was the urgency of the service that the Admiralty were obliged to give way to the demands the men made, and expresses were sent in every direction, saying, 'You

must give the shipwrights what they have asked.' When there was any difficulty in obtaining shipwrights to do the work in the King's yards, we had recourse to private yards; and but for the assistance derived from them this country could not have carried on the war. They obtained unlimited earnings, according to the scheme of task and job work, which regulated the prices for every kind of work; and the men were allowed to work over the usual hours. I have known them working by torchlight, in order to get on with the work, which was very pressing. No doubt the shipwrights felt their importance during the war, and took the opportunity, as other people would have done, of raising their demands. But as far as combination for wages goes, if the Navigation Laws were done away with, it would transfer the combination from the men to the masters. The master would say to the men, 'If you do not accede to the terms that I choose to offer you, I will go to a foreign country and build my ships there.'

"The durability of foreign-built ships is very uncertain. The Toulon ships last very long, because they are built with Italian oak, which may be said to be almost imperishable. There was a 64-gun ship that I remember some years ago; she was 70 years old, and as sound as a nut; there was not a defect in her; she was built in Toulon of Italian timber. Much was said in the war about building by contract, as being very expensive, because of the ships going to decay so rapidly. This fact is to be attributed chiefly to the circumstances of the time, which required so many ships; and they went to decay so rapidly because they were built in such a great hurry, and green material was frequently unavoidably introduced. Swedish ships are frequently built of fir, but they are more durable than others; Russian ships are very magnificent to look at, but decay very fast; Swedish ships are more durable than Russian.

"If the Navigation Laws should be done away, the ship-owner who would go to foreign countries to build ships would, from the same motive, take foreign seamen, who would be content with small wages and a cheap scale of dietary. Thus many of our seamen would be deprived of the employment to which they are at present justly entitled under the Navigation Laws; and *I confidently assert that the mercantile marine is everything to the navy, and that the navy could not exist without it.* The great battle of the 1st of June, 1794 (Lord Howe's), was fought, and that important victory gained, chiefly by the merchant seamen of the kingdom. We had not 20,000 men, and those scattered over the globe, when the war broke out in 1793; it was, therefore, the merchant service that enabled us rapidly to man some 60 sail of the line, and double the number of frigates and smaller vessels. It was by promptly bringing together about 35,000 or 40,000 seamen of the mercantile marine, in addition to those previously in the service, that

Admiral Gardner could speedily proceed to the West Indies with 7 sail of the line; that Lord Hood could have 22 sail of the line in the Mediterranean, to occupy Toulon, and capture Corsica, while other squadrons were sent to America and the East Indies to protect our interests in those quarters; and Lord Howe to protect the Channel with 27 sail of the line: thus giving security to our own homes, and protection to our colonies and commerce all over the world. Notwithstanding these proofs of naval energy, the number of men obtained was inadequate to the wants of the country. The merchant service, suddenly drained of so many thousands, could afterwards give only a comparatively small and occasional supply as ships arrived from foreign parts, or as apprentices grew out of their time. Now, this continued, though insufficient, succour to the navy could never have been maintained during the war but for the provision of the Navigation Laws in making it compulsory on shipowners to take a certain number of sea apprentices. But this system is about to be extinguished, though I do hope Her Majesty's ministers will well consider a matter of such vast importance to England's naval power before they alter the law. We had for many years of the war 147,000 men, including 33,000 marines; and it may be well to look a-head, and see if it be possible to keep up such a number hereafter, should the shipowner be released from the obligation he is under to bring in a succession of new hands. Even as it was, in the last war the want of more seamen was severely felt, and the squadrons I have alluded to were short of their complements. This was felt to so inconvenient a degree by the fleet in the Mediterranean, that I was detached by Lord Hood, in November 1793, in the frigate I commanded, to raise Maltese seamen, and a line-of-battle ship was sent to the same place for a similar purpose. While we were struggling to make up numbers abroad, the merchants of London, with their accustomed good feeling, offered a bounty of 40s. to able seamen, and 20s. to ordinary seamen, in addition to the royal bounty, to every man who would enter for the navy; and, finding this bounty did not procure many men, another meeting was held in the City, when it was agreed to give ten guineas bounty to able seamen, and eight guineas to ordinary seamen, and six guineas to landsmen. Still the distress was so urgent that Mr. Pitt, early in 1795, procured an Act for raising a certain number of men in each county, a measure which added about 10,000 landsmen of poor quality, who swelled our numbers, but without adding satisfactorily to the efficiency of the ships. After this, Mr. Pitt obtained two other Acts, one setting aside for six months all protection against impressment in the coal trade, the other making it compulsory on the different seaports of the kingdom to raise each a certain number of seamen; and, to the best of my recollection, the number so raised came near to 20,000,

obtained by bounties, in some instances amounting to £30, for an able seaman. I mention this distress and difficulty in getting seamen in time of war, to show how serious a matter it is to adopt any measure which can by possibility hazard a diminution of the supply. It is said by some persons that the abrogation of the Navigation Laws will increase the number of seamen, because this sanguine calculation anticipates an increase of shipping; but my consideration of the chances leads me to a different conclusion. A person whose opinion carries great weight (and justly so), in a speech delivered three weeks ago, made a deep impression by giving a hope that the supply of seamen in a future war will be in proportion to the increase of shipping tonnage which has taken place since we armed for war in 1793. Thus he offers a sort of "Rule of Three" proposition, namely, if 1,500,000 tons of shipping in 1793 could rapidly raise the number of men borne in the navy from 20,000 to 86,000, what may we not expect now that we have 4,000,000 tons of shipping? But by the Act of Queen Anne, vessels of 30 tons were obliged to take an apprentice; whereas under the Act of 1835 a vessel of 200 tons takes only one apprentice. Under the Act of Queen Anne, vessels of 400 tons took five apprentices; and under that of 1835, only two. Formerly ships of 1400 tons were obliged to take 15 apprentices; whereas under the present Act the largest ship built is only required to take five. So that the lesser amount of tonnage in 1793 gave a larger supply of fresh hands than our 4,000,000. The chief advantage of a comparison of the two periods as regards tonnage is, that the increase to 4,000,000 exhibits a noble proof of our commercial growth under the protection of the Navigation Laws, and seems to warn us of what we hazard in giving up that amount of tonnage to be scrambled for by all the nations of the world. When we see our country raised under the Navigation Laws to such commercial splendour, and so high in naval renown, we ought to think deeply, seriously, and long, before we commit such national blessings to hazard. If the shipowner were left at liberty to man his ships with foreigners, which was at first intended (and would probably be done for the sake of cheapness in so severe a competition), what would be the use of increased numbers to the navy if they were foreigners?

"No one can hold the principle of impressment in greater abhorrence than I do; and yet no man living is more sensible of the immeasurable importance of such a power, and the absolute necessity of the application of it in the event of a war, always remembering that it is never brought into use but when the country is in peril. Experience has taught me what impressment has practically done for us in times past, having myself been in three armaments—1787, 1790, and 1791—when upon each occasion the equipment of the fleet by means of

impressment was like magic; and the consequence of the prompt display of the gigantic naval strength of this country was on each of those occasions the saving of thousands of lives and millions of money. And if these be objects worthy of national regard, we must submit to the mortification of giving a decided sanction to such a trespass on the liberty of the subject. On the 2nd of May, 1790, the King in council authorised the issue of warrants for the impressment of seafaring men, and I think it was on the 16th of June, that Admiral Barrington, with whom I then served, put to sea with a large division of the fleet. Earl Howe soon followed with another division, leaving 23 sail of the line in a forward state of equipment at the different ports. The two divisions, comprising 31 sail of the line, including 8 three-deckers and 19 frigates, &c., united in Torbay, and sailed thence on the 17th of August. This never could have been accomplished but by the power of impressment; and my sincere belief is, that if you lose that power you will lose your country. Some shipowners, though averse to the abolition of the Navigation Laws in other respects, would be glad to see the system as regards apprentices done away. I do not believe the apprentices are much expense to the shipowner, for though they eat as much as men they soon grow up to be active and useful in the ship, and then they do a man's duty without wages. I consider the law which makes it compulsory to take apprentices a very valuable part of the Navigation Laws, and one that ought not on any account to be given up.

"There is no doubt that the shipowner would find himself driven by competition to do everything he possibly could to cheapen both shipbuilding and navigation. The wages of the Danes, Swedes, and Norwegians are known to be lower than the English, and they are content with an inferior scale of diet. The Americans are very glad to get them, as they are steadier men; but they do not go over to America in great numbers. If you were to put them in the same ship with English sailors, they would naturally say, 'If we work with the English, we will work for the same wages;' but if you make a clean sweep of the English sailors on board a ship, and take nothing but foreign sailors, you will get the whole crew at a cheaper rate. As a natural consequence of the repeal of the Navigation Laws, our capitalists or shipowners would remove to a foreign country, and there build Danish or Swedish vessels, and man them with the seamen of those countries. British seamen are not duly appreciated in our country, and they go in great numbers to America, where their worth is more justly estimated. American ships of war are full of British seamen. I think the real practical seaman is the North-country sailor—the coasting sailor, and the sailor now very scarce, or that we have now lost nearly, I am afraid altogether—I mean the South Sea Fishery,

which has produced the noblest fellows I ever saw in my life. That trade also gave a great revenue to this country, but is now lost to us. I have no doubt that the most satisfactory men in our ships of war are men who have been trained in the navy, and know the habits and discipline of the service; and more particularly it will be so by the measures which the present Board of Admiralty has introduced, and for which they deserve great credit."

Captain Sir James Stirling, Royal Navy, commanding Her Majesty's Ship *Howe*, stated:—

"I was examined in 1847, before the Committee of the House of Commons upon the Navigation Laws. I have no desire to make any alteration in the evidence I then gave. I stated that the whole number of seamen in the navy derived from the merchant service does not exceed 25 per cent. I stated that in a ship of the line which I commanded the number of seamen who had been trained in the merchant service did not exceed a 20th part of the whole crew; and that on a reference to the books of other ships, I had found the same, or nearly the same, proportion to exist. I further stated that a large proportion of the men obtained from the merchant service were of an inferior description; that many deserted from their first ships, and consequently we were not anxious to obtain supplies from that source; and generally, that at the present period of peace, the merchant service was not a nursery of seamen for the navy, nor likely, in the event of war, to afford a sufficient supply of men for the protection of the country. I spoke of able seamen. Ordinary seamen who have been trained in the merchant service are not trained seamen. An able seaman's qualifications, as laid down in the naval instructions, are that he shall be capable of performing all the essential duties of a seaman. Supposing the Admiralty were suddenly called upon to fit out 10 sail of the line, and having, as I believe, not more than one man in four who is a seaman, I do not think we possess, with the navy as at present constituted, the means of extending that force without additional seamen. The only source of supply for those additional seamen open in that case would be *the mercantile marine*. I have a plan for altering that arrangement, and under which, instead of having to appeal to the mercantile navy, the military marine would be enabled at all times to supply itself. I have had the honour of presenting my plan to Lord Auckland."

The plan, a draft of which was here submitted to the Committee, may be thus briefly described:—A number of

The framers of Mr. Labouchere's Bill, however, have anticipated the probability of British capitalists finding it to their advantage to employ foreign shipping, and have, therefore, provided for their exercising that discretion. Mr. Porter has "no objection" to our shipowners building ships abroad, and his *confrères* have also nodded assent to the free-trade dictum; but what, in that case, is to become of British shipwrights, caulkers, joiners, block, pump, and mast makers, riggers, sail-makers, and all the host of men, women, and children, supported directly or indirectly by the shipping now built and outfitted in this country*? Blackwall, Limehouse, and Wapping will exist only in name, and the whole crew now inhabiting those localities must be shipped off to Prussia or to America, there to re-engage, if they can, with their present employers. This is no highly-varnished picture of events, which will as surely come to pass as that the Navigation Laws are abrogated.

BRITISH AND FOREIGN SEAMEN.

Unless English shipmasters are empowered by law to "handspike" or flog their sailors, and to exercise any similar gently persuasive eloquence which they may feel disposed, they must forego British sailors. But Mr. Labouchere's new law that is to be says "No, you must continue to man your ship as heretofore;" consequently, the British ship-owner would be obliged, in order to save himself from ruin, to sail his ship under the flag of some other nation more favoured than his own. In that case he would make arrangements for shipping a crew in Sweden, Denmark, or Prussia. The arguments in support of this deduction are so clearly set forth in the evidence of Mr. Young, Mr. Wigram, Mr. Enderby, and other men capable of forming an accurate judgment, that I do not look upon it as a proceeding in the slightest degree problematical.

* See p. 135.

THE APPRENTICESHIP CLAUSE,

If abolished, would be satisfactory to many shipowners who now think it a hardship, and would not to any great extent diminish the rising generation of sailors. We have it clearly in evidence, that if not compulsory upon shipowners, perhaps the larger proportion would still take an equal number; and whether apprentices or boys not apprenticed, would matter little to the country, in a national point of view. In time of war shipowners would have apprentices for their own sakes, because those under indenture are not liable to impressment. The evil appears to be, that the clause presses unequally upon shipowners in different trades. To many it is not a consideration, but to others it is; and as we find from Mr. Brown's evidence, that the number of apprentices employed exceeds that required by law to the extent of 10,000, I think its continuance a matter for consideration.

BRITISH AND FOREIGN CAPTAINS.

There is such an irreconcileable diversity of opinions upon the relative qualities of master-mariners, British and foreign, that one is at a loss for a clue to unravel the mystery. I imagine, however, that the truth will be found to lie between the extremes, and that master-mariners of both countries are neither so bad nor so good as they have been represented. But enough has been shown to demonstrate the propriety of mates of ships undergoing an examination prior to being trusted as masters. This should be a statutory regulation, and not as it is now, in a great degree, a voluntary one. It would be unfair to compel a master who has for many years conducted a ship across the ocean to undergo a schoolboy's examination; but before a mate obtains promotion, a certificate from the examiner should be a *sine qua non*.

do not think, if shipowners were left to themselves, they would take a great many boys. I should like very much to be deprived of the boys on board the *Howe*. I think I could get able seamen to perform all the duties which they perform, yet the best seamen are those who have been bred up in the service, because they are trained to arms. The very best school for thorough seamen is the coal trade. The great objection to the apprenticeship system is, that it appears to be an arbitrary interference with that description of labour, and creates at times a greater number of seamen than can find employment. It is also objectionable upon the ground that it is an obligation under which you place the master, without regard to the cost and inconvenience it may occasion. And there is another objection to it: I have been told by a law practitioner in the City, that the quantity of law business which is created by the operation of the apprenticeship law is beyond all belief; and this, he informed me, is a ground of objection on the part of shipowners to the apprenticeship law.

" We have 161 able seamen and petty officers out of 812 on board the *Howe*. With regard to those men I had inquiries made of the men themselves, and I found that there were 37 able seamen who had never been in the merchant service, 34 who had been occasionally in it, and 45 who had been apprenticed and brought up in it; but of those 45 there were only 26 really entitled to the rating of able seamen, and 19 whom we call indifferent seamen. On the whole there were 39 able seamen, including 13 petty officers, who had been apprenticed and brought up in the merchant service, out of 812, which is nearly 25 per cent. upon the number of seamen, but less than five per cent. of the whole crew. When the question is, what proportion of *able seamen* are trained in and supplied from the merchant service to the navy, it may lead to misapprehension if it be not clearly pointed out that it is *seamen*, and not *ordinary seamen*, that are contemplated. A large proportion of the ordinary seamen on board a ship are young men who have overgrown the age of boys, but who are not rated able seamen till they come forward for examination, and are found to possess the necessary qualifications. They are not trained. My statement with regard to the number of seamen procured from the merchant service is intended to be applied to *able seamen*, and not to the number of men accustomed to the sea. Three-fourths of the ordinary seamen never become seamen at all. After long service they are generally rated seamen, but without having the qualities; and the consequence is that a ship filled up with such men if she came into action and required to repair damages, or if she got on a lee shore and was obliged to reef, furl, or shift sails, could not be saved by ordinary seamen.

Captain J. Toup Nicolas, C.B., K.H., of the Royal Navy, stated:—

"I have commanded sloops and ships of war for about 17 or 18 years actively at sea. I have always looked to the mercantile navy for the purpose of supplying our ships when short of hands, and I have always found it succeed. The seamen bred in the merchant service are the best in the world, the most trustworthy in danger and in all difficulties. I am not of opinion that the Royal Navy can be carried on without the merchant service. I think we must look to it as our main stay. I have always regarded it in that light, particularly in a war and on foreign stations. I am of opinion that apprenticeship in the merchant service is a most valuable system. I do not think it a heavy burden on the shipowner. Apprentices become very efficient in the merchant ships in one or two years at most, and are then qualified to perform many of the duties of seamen. I commanded the *Pilot* sloop-of-war from 1809 to 1816; when we had men killed or wounded we always recruited others from the merchant shipping at Malta and elsewhere, where we went to refit, and chiefly by volunteers, and in the end, I believe, we were almost entirely re-manned by merchant seamen. Towards the end of 1842, or beginning of 1843, I was going from China to Valparaiso on my way home, but on reaching Hobart Town I heard of the aggressions of the French at Tahiti; I deemed it my duty to go there, and thought it right to make my ship as efficient as possible, in case of our coming into collision with the French squadron. Finding that I could get good seamen in the ports of Hobart Town and Sydney, I asked the useless part of my crew (composed of labourers, shoemakers, tailors, &c.) whether they would like to stay in the colonies, and upon their volunteering to do so I obtained leave of the Governor and discharged about 100, and completed the ship with excellent thorough-bred seamen from the merchant ships. I have always found that British sailors, when they fancy there is any chance of a ship having something to do against an enemy, are ready to volunteer, and those men fancied at the time that we were likely to have employment at Tahiti. I was always careful not to distress merchant ships, taking only four or five from each. On other occasions when men enter for a man-of-war and the merchant ship becomes short of hands, we always send some of our crew to navigate the vessel to her destination. I remember, when coming down from China, meeting a merchant vessel near the Straits of Sunda, and the captain begged of me to take out of his ship some men who had mutinied; I accordingly took them, and gave him some of our men in exchange. I consider it a most important privilege to be able to enter seamen from the merchant ships if

they volunteer, especially on foreign stations. We have there no other means of completing our crews when vacancies arise from death and other casualties. I should be sorry indeed to see this power abandoned.

"With reference to entering boys for the Royal Navy, I think it an excellent measure, and one likely to prove of vast advantage to the service. They may not remain in the service continuously, as, after they become men and are paid off, they very often go into the merchant service, but whilst there they are sure to acquire more knowledge and to return to us again with increased ability as seamen. It has always been my opinion that the two services are closely united, and that we must ever look to the mercantile navy for manning our ships of war. I have always found men when I wanted them, and the very best from merchant ships. Sometimes we impressed during the war, but, generally speaking, the men got were volunteers. Perhaps the chance of prize-money led them to volunteer. Very many merchant sailors who have mixed with our men-of-war seamen, and learnt the advantages enjoyed in our ships of war, fully appreciate them, especially the prospect of the pension; but the difference of wages is the great drawback to merchant sailors entering on board our men-of-war."

Mark Whitwill, Esq., of Bristol*, stated:—

"I served in the navy in 1810, in which year I was impressed at Greenock. I was at the time before the mast, in a merchantman, and after being impressed was sent to Plymouth, at which place I was put on board the *Astrea* frigate, Captain Charles M. Schomberg. We sailed to the Cape of Good Hope, and from thence to the Isle of France. Our complement was, I should think, about 280 or 300. Every man who had any pretensions to practical seamanship had been a merchant seaman. I knew all the crew from having been three years in the ship. I was captain of the main-top all that time, and I knew every man's character; and all the leading seamen, whether warrant officers or petty officers, were men who had been bred in the merchant service. I was in the *Astrea's* action off Madagascar. We took the *Néréide* and *Renommée*. There were three English against three French ships. I was captain of a gun on the quarter-deck. The major part of the ship's company consisted of impressed men. I believe we did our duty efficiently. I am persuaded that the navy never could be manned effectively in any other way than from the merchant service. Having gone to sea at the age of eleven, I should say that with the peculiar kind

* See p. 229 for the general evidence of this gentleman.

of hardship and hard training of boys in the merchant service, and the thorough initiating in every little minutia connected with their profession, though they have not been on board a man-of-war at all, after a fortnight they are well able to be leading men in most cases. My impression from what I have seen of English seamen, is, that if they knew the country was in such a position as to have necessity for their services a very large proportion of them would volunteer for a time, particularly if the time were limited. As a proof I may observe that when we came home from the East Indies the American war had ceased, and I said myself (although I was not very fond of the navy, for it was my determination to get forward in the merchant service), rather than the country should make peace, and permit the Americans to take advantage of us when we had not a friend to help us, I was willing to go to sea for six months, *gratis*, in order to do what I could towards thrashing them. The seamen felt the act of impressment at the time as a hardship, but a large proportion of them got reconciled to it; and many of the *Astraea*'s crew, having been out three years, and having long leave, returned again to their duty. In the first instance there was some dissatisfaction, till they got initiated, and then they appeared reconciled, and certainly endeavoured to do their duty. Before the enemy there was no dissatisfaction manifested, quite the reverse, it was all enthusiasm. If the war had depended entirely upon their exertions they could not have done more than they did. The grievance most severely felt was the indefinite time for which they were taken. I have heard them complain that they were going for life, and I had the same idea myself when I left. When I lost sight of the cliffs of Albion I felt depressed by that thought, whereas if I had been going for three years or five years I should have been reconciled to it. The men were not sent to one station only, but when they returned they were sent off to another. But now the law being that no seaman shall be obliged to serve compulsorily more than five years, nor to serve at all till after a proclamation in which the men are called upon to serve voluntarily, it will lessen the feeling of impressment being a grievance; and if they knew the country required their services I am persuaded they would feel bound as a body to come forward. I am sure they would not let the enemy come near us.

"British seamen are as a body constitutionally thoughtless. My impression is that they are that kind of men that it would be very difficult to depend upon their coming to any fixed place when required. On the Continent men when discharged from the merchant service are treated as felons if they do not go home; but the British seaman when he comes to his own country minds nobody. Unless there was some moral power over him in that respect I do not think any register

would answer. I know that from the working of the present ticket and register system it is completely useless. I do not apprehend myself that there would be any difficulty in manning the navy in a case of emergency. Although I have lived above half a century if the country required my services I should be ready to give them. It is a fact that if a sailor is serving on board a merchant vessel, and chooses to go on board a Queen's vessel, no engagement he has made with the merchant will hold good; but I think in most cases where men volunteer to go into the navy naval officers give what we call "half marrows" for them, that is, for good seamen they will give very inferior ones, and we are compelled to pay them wages. I should not like to see it done away, though in some cases it is a hardship to the merchant vessels. I would not hold up my hand against it."

Rear-Admiral Sir Thomas John Cochrane, K.C.B., recently returned from the East India and China command, stated :—

" It is my opinion that the supply of seamen for the navy depends in a very great measure upon the mercantile marine, particularly in time of war. In a small war with some inferior State I think men might be obtained voluntarily, if encouraged by bounties and the hope of prize-money; but in a war, say with France, I do not think the navy could be manned without either impressment, or conscription, or ballot, or some other coercive means being resorted to. I doubt whether, with respect to the system of registering seamen, that by means of bounty and proclamation 10,000 or 15,000 men could be raised without an impress. The sources from which you would get your men upon such an occasion would be from among those employed in that portion of your trade which was interrupted by the war, but that source would have its limits; after that you would not get seamen from the merchant service voluntarily, for, whatever pay you might give, the merchant must infallibly give so much more. For the reason before stated if I, as a merchant, load a ship with £20,000 worth of goods in a vessel probably not navigated with more than 25 or 30 men, whether I pay £2 or £5 a month is a matter of perfect indifference compared with the great object of getting my goods speedily to market. I have known during the war a vessel arrive at Barbadoes—what in those days was called a runner—a vessel which came without a convoy, and the seamen have received £60 for the run out, nearly £2 a day: the Crown could never compete with such wages.

" My opinion is that the practice of recruiting men from merchant ships abroad is not, on the whole, injurious. In the first place, with regard to masters and seamen of merchant vessels, it is in some respects advantageous, because if they do not agree they can separate without any of those contentions and disputes which naturally would take place if they were obliged to remain together. In some respects it operates as a check on the conduct both of master and seaman, and it is certainly a great advantage to the ships of war. I could not have kept up my squadron when I was in China without that source of supply. The *Agincourt* I should say recruited half or more than half her seamen during the period she was in China, and other ships more or less in the same manner. My orders were most particular never to distress a merchant ship. If we wanted men we sent up to Whampoa and got them, and I have known a considerable number of men obtained at one time, but not from one particular ship.

" A boy on board the *Agincourt*, and taken to China, would certainly not be made so good a seaman during the three years that he was in that ship as he would be had he been in a collier trading between London and Sunderland at the end of those three years. One who had served an apprenticeship in the navy for seven years would not be equal to one who had finished his seven years in a collier. If you can draw your boys from the mercantile marine, no doubt, as far as they go, they are better seamen. Those brought up in colliers are better seamen, but I am not sure that it would do to have a very large proportion of them. Few captains, I believe, would like to have a ship manned entirely with merchant seamen, because they are generally lazier, and not accustomed to the habits and usages of a ship of war; but, as far as seamanship goes, undoubtedly the colliery trade I suppose is the finest in the world. With respect to the apprenticeship regulation, I do not myself see that its repeal would make, practically speaking, any great difference; because so long as you oblige ships to have three-fourths British seamen, so long they must have boys in training. It may be complained of as a grievance, because the law enforces it; but I do not see, if you repeal the law to-morrow, but that they would have nearly the same proportion."

Being asked:—

" If the Navigation Laws were repealed, and the restriction requiring that British ships shall be manned with three-fourths British seamen were abolished, do you conceive that there would be a loss of nationality in the seamen of this country ?"

Sir Thomas replied:—

" I took great pains, in reading over the evidence given before the House of Commons last year, prior to my return to

this country, to see if I could elicit anything to lead my opinions, but really I found it so very contradictory and conflicting that, I acknowledge I have not improved my information very much by doing so ; but when I see this country with a debt of £.800,000,000, involving taxes to the amount of £.28,000,000 a year, and know from experience that people flock from England as fast as they can with a view to economy, everything being dearer here than in any other part of the world, I cannot myself see how those things which are involved in shipbuilding and sailing, timber, iron, and other material, as well as provisions, wages, &c., &c., can be much cheaper than in any other country, when every other thing is so much dearer. Therefore the conclusion to which I incline is, that if the Navigation Laws were abolished, other countries could carry on the commerce at a cheaper rate than we at present, burdened as we are, would be enabled to do."

Captain Maurice Frederick Fitzhardinge Berkeley, C.B.,
a Member of the House of Commons, stated :—

"I am one of the senior captains in the navy, and also hold the office of one of the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty. In peace time we prefer those seamen who have been brought up in the navy ; we generally get better seamen from the merchant service as regards every branch of their profession, and they are more inured to rigours, and to depend upon their own resources. It takes some time to teach them gunnery. It would be quite impossible to obtain 15,000 or 20,000 additional men to man our ships without going to the merchant service. I think it a great advantage to have a reciprocal transfer between merchant ships and men-of-war. If we suddenly required 10,000 or 12,000 seamen from the merchant service, we might get a good many by bounties, but that is very expensive ; for if we advertise a bounty to merchant seamen, we must give half the amount to every man in the Royal Navy. I know of no other than a compulsory mode by which our ships could be manned in an emergency. I think you ought not to give up having your merchant ships manned by a certain number of British seamen ; but unless the repeal of the Navigation Laws reduces the number of merchant ships, I cannot see what difference it can make in manning the navy, if that clause is kept up. I believe myself that it would not lessen the number of British merchant ships. If that clause were repealed, I cannot say what the British shipowner might do ; but while we have another nation (I mean the Americans) speaking the same language, if you did away with the law, and the men did not choose to enter the British service, they might all get natu-

ralized as Americans, and you would not be able to touch them. With regard to the apprenticeship regulations, I consider anything which induces men to go to sea must be a benefit to the navy in some way; but I have not at present traced any great number of apprentices into the Royal Navy. I was chairman of the commission appointed to inquire into the proportion of merchant seamen serving in the Royal Navy, and we endeavoured to ascertain the proportion; but we were obliged to depend in a great measure upon the accounts that the men gave, and we made out that a proportion of about two-fifths of the number that we had in the navy had been brought up in the merchant service. In any calculation of the number of seamen employed in the navy, ordinary seamen should certainly be reckoned. Sir James Stirling does not include ordinary seamen in his calculation, but I think they ought to be included.

“Formerly, we obtained a very superior description of able seamen from the whalers, because they were taught to undergo great difficulties and to overcome them. Now, the sailors in our own men-of-war are quite as good as those brought up in the merchant service, because in the merchant service they have not the facilities of rigging and unrigging, and seeing the whole working of the ship throughout, that they had in former times. Men brought up in colliers and in the coasting trade are first-rate sailors; but we do not like them so well as men who have been trained on board men-of-war, because they are not accustomed to any discipline, and they must undergo considerable drilling before they are equal to the gunnery exercise. We used to obtain seamen from the East India and China trade, but I do not think they frequently come to us now. A man-of-war’s man going into a merchant ship, I think, induces men employed there to return from the merchant service to the navy; in short, every man in the navy would wish to see both services flourishing, and to be of use to each other. The Act for the registration of seamen has fallen a good deal under my notice since I have been at the Admiralty. I was one who took it up very strongly at first, and thought it might be carried out; but, practically, I think it has failed. It would be a good law if carried out, but it is completely evaded. At present it is merely statistical. If you do not render it compulsory for British ships to have a certain proportion of the men who navigate them English seamen, in the event of your going on board with a view to impressment, every man would say he was an American in case of his not wishing to be taken out of the ship. Englishmen would serve on board merchantmen, carrying with them American citizenships; so that I apprehend compulsory impressment could hardly be carried through in the event of the Navigation Laws being repealed to that extent. I have seen Sir James Stirling’s plan for man-

ning the navy ; but I do not agree with him, because he meant it to be totally independent of the merchant service ; and I thought that it was not only expensive, but that it was impossible to be independent of the merchant service—it was wholly out of the question."

Robert Anderson, Esq., a shipowner, of South Shields*, stated :—

"I have been a shipowner upwards of 34 years, but have been connected with the shipping interest from a very early period ; I went to sea very young. I was examined by the House of Commons Committee on the Navigation Laws last year. I believe that evidence, upon reconsideration, to be strictly true ; but there are some points not embraced in it, for instance, the experience I have as to the manner in which the navy was manned during the last war. All the effective men were taken from the merchant service for that purpose, and merchant ships, with the exception of transports in the Government service and vessels employed in the fisheries were manned with apprentices, protected men, and foreigners. 'Protected men' were disabled men not fit for service ; but the young men who were fit were taken into the navy. In case of an emergency, I do not know from what other source seamen could be obtained. They would first be taken from the coasting trade, and from the other trades, when they could be got to the extent required. As to their impressment, it would depend very much upon the necessity ; if you wanted to man 30 sail of the line I do not see how it could be done without taking them at once. The question was considered when Sir James Graham was First Lord of the Admiralty. The registration of seamen certainly has not answered the purpose that I thought it would have answered. I think it has quite failed. The Apprentice Act has been in operation a great many years, and, as far as my experience goes, I do not think it has increased the number of apprentices. I speak of the North of England ; and I think we had quite as many apprentices before that Act was passed as since ; and since the passing of that Act most of the ships that I am acquainted with carry a greater number of apprentices than the Act requires. I never felt the Act to be oppressive. It may cause an increased expense to shipowners ; for instance, in London, when the vessels are put into docks, and do not require anybody to take care of them ; but the case is very different when the ships are lying in navigable rivers, because then the apprentices live on board and take care of the ship. There are cases in which the Act may prove a hardship.

* For the evidence of this gentleman on the general question see p. 174.

The shipowner has to keep his apprentices at all times, whether the ship is at sea or not, and to give them medical assistance or aid, and also to provide them, at least he ought to do, with some education whilst the ship is unemployed. This cannot be done without some expense; but he has their services at all times when they are required. The Apprentice Act compels shipowners, whether they think it consistent with their interest or not, to keep a certain number of apprentices; but that it has increased the number of apprentices I have very great doubts. I do not think it has had the effect of driving experienced and able seamen out of the merchant service into the foreign service. If a ship of 400 tons has six apprentices her complement of men and boys will be more in number than if she had all able-bodied seamen. I should not think a ship manned as efficiently with six apprentices and 12 men as I should if she had only two or three apprentices and 15 or 16 men. Some of the young apprentices are of very little use for the first year or two, and are taken to learn their business; until they have learnt it they are of no use. During the early part of their servitude they do not displace seamen."

John Hoskins Brown, Esq., a Lieutenant of the Royal Navy, and Registrar of Merchant Seamen, was examined at some length respecting the mode in which he carried on the business of his office. His opinions with reference to the value of the mercantile navy to the country as an arm of national defence, and as to the facilities it must at all times afford for manning the Royal Navy in an emergency, are as follow:—

"The greatest effect of the Registry Office at present is to rear up apprentices. The number of apprentices introduced into sea service since the passing of the Act in 1835 is 95,000, of which there are about 33,000 remaining; the rest have merged into seamen or died, or their indentures have been cancelled. Conceiving that the merchant service is the source and resource of our naval power, and the element of a large navy, I imagine that this office, by maintaining so many apprentices and taking care that they are trained up, has a very great effect in bettering the condition of the source from which the navy is manned. The Voluntary Enlistment Act reduced service in the navy to five years in time of war when called on by proclamation, and also gives very great encouragement to men coming forward promptly; they have double bounty if they come forward within a certain number of days, and all the men serving in the fleet have half bounty. Now the bearing of the

Registry Act upon that proclamation would be, that if men did not respond, the existence of the ticket as a test of their identity would oblige them to obey it. A provision in the Registry Act gives authority to officers of the navy and Customs to go on board every British merchant ship. If the proclamation were for seamen between 22 and 32, the age of each seaman being denoted on his register-ticket, when the officer inspected the list it would show if there were any men on board that ship within that scope who had not complied with the proclamation. Sailors are quite aware of their position. I have conversed with hundreds upon this subject. They are quite aware that they must serve the Queen in time of war, because there are no other men who can perform the required duties; they are quite resigned to it. I do not think it would do to give up the coercive power; but as regards 10,000 men, I do not think there would be the slightest difficulty of getting them if the bounty were offered. The only inconvenience in the way of getting 10,000 men is, that when bounty is proclaimed you must give it to the whole fleet; that cannot be avoided as the law stands. If men are required for 30 sail of the line you would employ every seaman fit for service. It is of no use mincing the matter; we have not more seamen physically fit for duty than the fleet would require in case of war. At such a time, I conceive it would be the wisest policy to put forth the whole of our power at once. The same process that would get 10,000 would get the whole; no man could go to sea. It would only be to extend the scope of the proclamation for men from 18 to 40 or 45 years of age. I conceive that we should want 50,000 or 60,000. I have taken very great pains and possessed opportunities of continually questioning sailors respecting the navy; and I think their objection to that service is not on the score either of the discipline or the pay. It is the inherent disposition of a seaman to rove about and change his service; and I think, in time of war, that they objected to the unlimited service for small wages when men were getting £.7 or £.8 a month in merchant ships. Their present reluctance to entering the navy is the long period of service, four or five years, and it cannot be altered without great detriment.

"I conceive a mercantile marine to be the source and foundation of naval power. I would derive all my seamen from the merchant service; I would have very few boys in the navy if I could help it. So far as affects the navy, the apprentice system in the merchant service operates in this manner, that it makes good seamen; therefore the source is better. If you abandon the system, and leave it to chance, you may still make them, but you are not sure of it. I know that my opinion is unpalatable to most naval officers, and particularly to those in authority; their principle is generally, 'Rear up boys and they will stick to you.' But I do not think a boy reared in the navy is more likely to stick to it than a boy reared in the mer-

chant service is to go into the navy, and I find that justified by every day's experience. A boy that serves in a man-of-war learns a portion of a seaman's duty; but a boy in the coal trade, learns every part, and must be up to the mark in all weathers and at all seasons. The boy in the coal ship has everything to do, the boy in the Queen's ship has only some things to do, and it would disarrange matters to give much attention to training them. That system of making the navy exclusive and rearing up your own men in it is a system that any nation may pursue, whereas the great element of our power and which we possess exclusively to such a great extent, is our commercial marine, and this should not be disregarded. Any country that has money, and ports, and population, may maintain a navy if they make it an exclusive one. The colliers are principally manned with boys; they have a master and mate, and perhaps two men on board a 200-ton ship, all the rest are boys, five or six apprentices, North-country boys. I think it a very great advantage that the sailors should alternate between the two services, and the two should be closely connected together, so that both would be benefited. The sailor's disposition is this: he may leave a public-house with the intention of going to a merchant ship, and he may be attracted to a man-of-war, or the reverse may happen; he is a creature of impulse, and easily acted on; he often gets into debt at his lodging-house, and then he is shipped whenever his landlord chooses. A sailor goes all over the world, and you lose sight of him for two or three years, and he turns up again. My view is, that we should prefer maintaining the apprenticeship system in the merchant service, and not having more boys in the military marine than can be properly educated in it as seamen; and I would bend every energy to improve that source of our power, and eschew anything calculated to widen the distinction between the navy and merchant service."

With reference to Sir James Stirling's evidence as to the number of merchant seamen serving on board the *Howe*, Lieutenant Brown stated:—

"I found by dissecting the *Howe's* books, that of petty officers and seamen (not artificers) who had been derived from the Royal Navy, there were 24 petty officers, 59 able seamen, and 91 ordinary seamen; and that of those derived from the merchant service, there were 23 petty officers, 87 able seamen, and 132 ordinary seamen, leaving 68 in favour of the merchant service; 242 of her men first went to sea in the merchant service, and of those, 83 had been apprentices. I ascertained these points from my official categories. I have no doubt that Sir James Stirling mustered and questioned the men.

" It was generally reported at Sheerness that the *Meander* had the finest crew which had left this country for these twenty years, and there was not a merchant seaman on board of her ; that was so stated at the seaports, and I believe at the Admiralty. Now this is the dissection of the *Meander's* ship's company :—Served in the Royal Navy before, 10 petty officers, 45 able seamen, 11 ordinary seamen ; from the merchant service, 14 petty officers, 52 able seamen, 9 ordinary seamen ; giving a difference of 9 in favour of the merchant service. There are 24 who have served their indentures out as apprentices in the merchant service. I have the statement of a brig, which shows a greater proportion, because merchant seamen are fonder of small vessels than of large. The *Mutine* has 3 petty officers, 5 able seamen, and 4 ordinary seamen brought up in the navy ; 13 petty officers, 11 able seamen, and 2 ordinary seamen brought up in the merchant service ; showing a proportion of 14 in favour of the merchant service.

I have upon the registry, roundly speaking, 253,000 men, which includes seamen serving in the Royal Navy and Coast Guard, as well as in colonial ships ; in fact, all that have come to be registered. The number of seamen serving in our merchant service may be taken at 200,000, including the colonies. I do not mean the actual number afloat, because there are always a great many thousand seamen ashore. That includes those employed in the deep sea fishing-vessels. We only register those that sail on the open sea. Some fishermen on the coast are registered, but we do not call them seamen ; we keep a distinct account of them. As the register proceeds, it will show every man's service ; it will show what his position is when he has served, and he can always have proof. Any document coming out of the Registry Office, properly attested, is (by the Act) to be taken in a court of law the same as if the original were produced. If any amendment is to be made on the registry, I think it will be necessary to have revisions ; and if the Navigation Laws are to be abrogated, it will be most important to preserve a test of our seamen's nationality ; otherwise we may have plenty of seamen, but no British seamen. No man will hail for a British seaman if he comes under certain obligations ; but that is preserved in the intended Bill. The ships are to have three-fourths, therefore the proposed law does not interfere with the nationality of the crew. There are 10,000 more apprentices in the merchant service than the law requires. I think the shipowners have made it more of a grievance than there was any occasion for. It is in the small vessels, under 80 tons, which are not required to carry apprentices, that the excess is maintained, and in the coasting trade principally. The apprentices are between one-sixth and one-seventh of the whole of our seamen.

APPENDIX, A.

16 August, 1848.—12 VICT.

A

B I L L

TO AMEND THE LAWS IN FORCE FOR THE ENCOURAGEMENT OF BRITISH SHIPPING AND NAVIGATION.

[Note.—The Words printed in *Italics* are proposed to be inserted in the Committee.]

PREAMBLE.—Whereas it is expedient to amend the Laws now in force for the encouragement of British Shipping and Navigation; Be it Enacted, by The QUEEN's most Excellent MAJESTY, by and with the Advice and Consent of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons, in this present Parliament assembled, and by the Authority of the same, THAT from and after the *First day of January, One thousand eight hundred and Forty-nine*, the following Acts and parts of Acts shall be repealed; (that is to say), a certain Act passed in the Session of Parliament holden in the eighth and ninth years of the reign of Her present Majesty, intituled, “An Act “ for the Encouragement of British Shipping and Navigation;” and so much of a certain other Act passed in the said Session of Parliament, intituled, “An Act for the Registering of British Vessels,” as limits the privileges of vessels registered at Malta, Gibraltar, and Heligoland; and so much thereof as provides that no ship or vessel shall be registered, except such as are wholly of the build of some part of the British dominions; and so much as relates to the disqualification of ships repaired in a foreign country; and so much as prevents British ships which have been captured by or sold to foreigners from becoming entitled to be again registered as British, in case the same again become the property of British subjects; and so much of a certain other Act passed in the said Session of Parliament, intituled, “An Act to regulate the Trade of the British Possessions Abroad,” as provides that no goods shall be imported into or exported from any of the British possessions in America by sea from or to any place other than the United Kingdom, or some other of such possessions, except into or from the several ports denominated free ports; and so much thereof as provides for the limitation of the privileges granted to foreign ships by the law of

navigation in respect of importations into the British possessions in Asia, Africa, and America; and so much thereof as provides that no vessel or boat shall be admitted to be a British vessel or boat on any of the inland waters or lakes of America, except such as shall have been built at some place within the British dominions, and shall not have been repaired at any foreign place to a greater extent than in the said Act is mentioned; and so much of a certain other Act passed in the said Session of Parliament, intituled, " An Act for the general Regulation of the Customs," as prohibits the importation of train oil, blubber, spermaceti oil, head-matter, skins, bones, and fins, the produce of fish or creatures living in the sea, of foreign taking, unless in vessels which shall have been cleared out regularly with such oil, blubber, or other produce on board from some foreign port; and so much thereof as prohibits the importation of tea, unless from the Cape of Good Hope, or from places eastward of the same to the Straits of Magellan; and so much of a certain Act passed in the Session of Parliament holden in the seventh and eighth years of the reign of Her present Majesty, intituled, " An Act to amend and consolidate the Laws relating to Merchant Seamen, " and for keeping a Register of Seamen," as provides that the master or owner of every ship belonging to any subject of Her Majesty, and of the burthen of *eighty* tons or upwards (except pleasure-yachts), shall have on board at the time of her proceeding from any port of the United Kingdom, and at all times when absent from the United Kingdom, or navigating the seas, one apprentice or more in a certain proportion to the number of tons of his ship's admeasurement, and that if any such master or owner shall neglect to have on board his ship the number of apprentices thereby required, together with their respective registered indentures, assignments, and register-tickets, he shall forfeit and pay the sum of *ten pounds* in respect of each apprentice, indenture, assignment, or register-ticket so wanting or deficient; and so much as is now in force of a certain Act passed in the Session of Parliament holden in the fourth year of the reign of King ~~GEORGE~~ the Fourth, intituled, " An Act to consolidate and amend the several Laws now " in force with respect to Trade from and to Places within the Limits of the " Charter of the East India Company, and to make further Provisions with " respect to such Trade, and to amend an Act of the present Session of " Parliament for the registering of Vessels so far as it relates to Vessels " registered in India;" and also the following Acts and parts of Acts: so much of a certain Act passed in the fourth year of the reign of King ~~GEORGE~~ the Fourth, intituled, " An Act to authorise his Majesty, under certain " Circumstances, to regulate the Duties and Drawbacks on Goods imported " or exported in foreign Vessels, and to exempt certain foreign Vessels " from Pilotage," as relates to the regulation of duties and drawbacks; also an Act passed in the fifth year of the reign of King ~~GEORGE~~ the Fourth, intituled, " An Act to indemnify all Persons concerned in advising, issuing, " or acting under a certain Order in Council for regulating the Tonnage

" Duties on certain foreign Vessels, and to amend an Act of the last Session
" of Parliament for authorising his Majesty, under certain Circumstances,
" to regulate the Duties and Drawbacks on Goods imported or exported in
" any foreign Vessels ; " also so much of an Act passed in the Session of
Parliament holden in the fifth and sixth years of the reign of Her present
Majesty, intituled, " An Act to amend the Laws for the Importation of Corn,"
as enables Her Majesty, under certain circumstances, to prohibit the
importation of corn, grain, meal, or flour, from the dominions of certain foreign
powers.

2. COASTING TRADE OF UNITED KINGDOM AND ISLE OF MAN.—And
be it Enacted, That no goods or passengers shall be carried coastwise from
one part of the United Kingdom to another, or from the United Kingdom to
the Isle of Man, or from the Isle of Man to the United Kingdom, except in
British ships.

3. TRADE WITH THE CHANNEL ISLANDS.—And be it Enacted, That
no goods or passengers shall be imported into the United Kingdom from any
of the islands of Guernsey, Jersey, Alderney, or Sark; nor shall any goods
be exported from the United Kingdom to any of the said islands; nor shall
any goods be carried from any of the islands of Guernsey, Jersey, Alderney,
Sark, or Man, to any other of the said islands; nor from one part of any of
the said islands to another part of the same island, except in British ships.

4. COASTING TRADE OF THE BRITISH POSSESSIONS.—And be it
Enacted, That no goods or passengers shall be carried from one part of any
British possession in Asia, Africa, or America, other than the possessions of
the East India Company, to another part of the same possession, except in
British ships.

5. COLONIAL COASTING TRADE.—Provided always, and be it Enacted,
That if the Legislature, or proper legislative authority of any British posses-
sion, shall pass an Act or make an Ordinance authorising or permitting the
conveyance of goods or passengers from one part of such possession to another
part thereof, in other than British ships, or if the Legislatures of any two or
more possessions shall pass any Acts or Ordinances for the purpose of
placing the trade between them on a different footing, so far as relates to
the vessels in which it is to be carried on, from that on which it is placed by
this Act, and shall transmit the same in the proper manner to the Secretary
of State, in order that the same may be submitted to Her Majesty, and if
Her Majesty shall be graciously pleased to approve of such Acts or Ordinances,
then and in such case it shall be lawful for Her Majesty to issue an
Order in Council declaring Her Royal assent thereto, and upon the proclama-
tion of such assent in the colony, such Acts or Ordinances shall come into
operation, except so far as may be otherwise provided therein, or as may
be otherwise directed by such Order in Council, anything hereinbefore
contained to the contrary thereof notwithstanding.

6. BRITISH SHIPS.—And be it Enacted, That no ship shall be admitted

to be a British ship unless duly registered and navigated as such ; and that every British registered ship (so long as the registry of such ship shall be in force, or the certificate of such registry retained for the use of such ship) shall be navigated during the whole of every voyage (whether with a cargo or in ballast) in every part of the world, by a master who is a British subject, and by a crew whereof *three-fourths* at least are British seamen ; and if such ship be employed in a coasting voyage from one part of the United Kingdom to another, or in a voyage between the United Kingdom and the islands of Guernsey, Jersey, Alderney, Sark, or Man, or from one of the said islands to another of them, or from one part of either of them to another of the same, or be employed in fishing on the coasts of the United Kingdom, or of any of the said islands, then the whole of the crew shall be British seamen : Provided always, That every ship (except ships required to be wholly navigated by British seamen) which shall be navigated by one British seaman for every *twenty* tons of the burden of such ship shall be deemed to be duly navigated, although the number of other seamen may exceed *one-fourth* of the whole crew : Provided also, That if a due proportion of British seamen cannot be procured in any foreign port, or in any place within the limits of the East India Company's Charter, for the navigation of any British ship, or if such proportion be destroyed during the voyage by any unavoidable circumstance, and the master of such ship make proof of the truth of such facts to the satisfaction of the Collector and Comptroller of the Customs at any British port, or of any person authorised in any other part of the world to inquire into the navigation of such ship, the same shall be deemed to be duly navigated.

7. BRITISH SEAMEN.—And be it Enacted, That no person shall be deemed to be a British seaman, or to be duly qualified to be master of a British vessel, except persons of one of the following classes ; (that is to say), natural-born British subjects, or persons naturalised in that behalf by or under any Act of Parliament, or by or under any Act or Ordinance of the Legislature, or proper legislative authority of one of the British possessions, or made denizens by letters of denization, or persons who have become British subjects by virtue of the conquest or cession of some newly-acquired country, and who have taken the oath of allegiance to Her Majesty, or the oath of fidelity required by the treaty or capitulation by which such newly-acquired country came into Her Majesty's possession, or persons who have served on board any of Her Majesty's ships of war, in time of war, for the space of *three* years.

8. PROPORTION OF SEAMEN.—And be it Enacted, That if Her Majesty shall at any time, by her royal proclamation, declare that the proportion of British seamen necessary to the due navigation of British ships shall be less than the proportion required by this Act, every British ship navigated with the proportion of British seamen required by such proclamation shall be deemed to be duly navigated, so long as such proclamation shall remain in force.

9. **PRIVILEGES OF FOREIGN SHIPS.**—And be it Enacted, That in case it shall be made to appear to Her Majesty that British vessels are subject in any foreign country to any prohibitions or restrictions as to the voyages in which they may engage, or as to the articles which they may import into or export from such country, it shall be lawful for Her Majesty, if she think fit, by Order in Council, to impose such prohibitions or restrictions upon the ships of such foreign country, either as to the voyages in which they may engage from or to any part of the United Kingdom, or of any British possession in any part of the world, or as to the articles which they may import into or export from any part thereof, as Her Majesty may think fit, so as to place the ships of such country as nearly as possible on the same footing in British ports as that on which British ships are placed in the ports of such country.

10. **ADDITIONAL DUTIES UPON FOREIGN SHIPS MAY BE IMPOSED.**—And be it Enacted, That in case it shall be made to appear to Her Majesty that British ships are, either directly or indirectly, subject in any foreign country to any duties or charges of any sort or kind whatsoever from which the national vessels of such country are exempt, or that any duties are imposed upon articles imported or exported in British ships which are not equally imposed upon the like articles imported or exported in national vessels, or that any preference whatsoever is shown, either directly or indirectly, to articles imported or exported in national vessels over the like articles imported or exported in British vessels, or that British trade and navigation is not placed by such country upon as advantageous a footing as the trade and navigation of the most favoured nation, then and in any such case it shall be lawful for Her Majesty (if she think fit), by Order in Council, to impose such duty or duties of tonnage upon the ships of such nation entering into or departing from the ports of the United Kingdom, or of any British possession in any part of the world, or such duty or duties on all goods, or on any specified classes of goods, imported or exported in the ships of such nation, as may appear to Her Majesty justly to countervail the disadvantages to which British trade or navigation is so subjected as aforesaid.

11. And be it Enacted, That in every such Order Her Majesty shall specify what ships are to be considered as ships of the country or countries to which such Order applies; and all ships answering the description contained in such order shall be considered to be ships of such country or countries for the purposes of such Order.

12. And be it Enacted, That every such Order in Council as aforesaid shall, within *fourteen* days after the issuing thereof, be twice published in the "London Gazette," and that a copy thereof shall be laid before both Houses of Parliament within *six* weeks after the issuing the same, if Parliament be then sitting, and if not, then within *six* weeks after the commencement of the then next Session of Parliament.

14. And be it Enacted, That it is made a capital offence, or capital punishment, contrary to this Act, all such goods and the chattels, and the master of the ship in which the same are so imported, or capital punishment, shall forfeit the sum of one hundred pounds.

15. And be it Enacted, That all persons and companies subject under this Act shall be sued for, prosecuted, recovered, and disposed of, in such a sufficient or sufficient, as the master and of the same value as any property or forfeiture can be sued for, prosecuted, recovered, and disposed of, or may be mitigated or reduced, under an Act passed in the said Session of Parliament before in the eighth and ninth year of Her present Majesty, intituled, "An Act for the Prevention of Smuggling," and that the cause of all proceedings under this Act shall be informed out of the Commission of Enquiry of Committee.

16. However.—And be it Enacted, That all persons commanded by any Act or Ordinance of the Legislature, or proper legislative authority of any of the British governments in Asia, Africa, or America, and all persons authorized by or under any such Act or Ordinance to hold ships in British shipping, shall, in taking the oath of allegiance to Her Majesty, her heirs and successors, be deemed to be duly qualified to be owners or joint owners of British registered vessels: anything in the said second Act for the registering of British shipping to the contrary in anywise notwithstanding.

17. Power of Disqualification.—And be it Enacted, That the following declaration shall be sufficient for the declaration by the said her disqualification to be made by the owner or owners of any vessel previous to the registry thereof:—

"I, A. B., of [place of residence and occupation], do truly declare, that the ship or vessel [name], of [part or place], whence [master's name], is at present master, being [kind of build, burden, or cargo, as described in the certificate of the surveying officer], was [when and where built, or, if prior or forfeited, capture and condemnation as such], and that I, the said A. B. [and the other owners names and occupations, if any, and where they respectively reside (villages), town, place, or parish, and county, or if member of and resident in any factory in foreign parts, or in any foreign town or city, being an agent for or partner in any house or co-partnership actually carrying on trade in Great Britain or Ireland, the name of such factory, foreign town or city, and the names of such house or co-partnership], am [or are] sole owner [or owners] of the said vessel, and that no other person or persons whatever hath or have any right, title, interest, share, or property therein or thereto; and that I, the said A. B. [and the said other owners, if any], am [or are] truly and bona fide a subject [or subjects] of Great Britain, and that I, the said A. B., have not [nor have any of the other owners, to the best of my knowledge and belief] taken the oath of

allegiance to any foreign state whatever [except under the terms of some capitulation, describing the particulars thereof], or that since my taking [or his or their taking] the oath of allegiance to [naming the foreign states respectively to which he or any of the said owners shall have taken the same], I have [or he or they hath or have] become a denizen [or denizens, or naturalised subject or subjects, as the case may be] of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland by Her Majesty's letters patent [or by an Act of Parliament, or by or under or by virtue of an Act or Ordinance of the Legislature of
or have been authorised by an Act or Ordinance of the Legislature of
of to hold shares in British shipping
within the said colony, and since the passing of such Act or Ordinance, I have [or he or they hath or have] taken the oath of allegiance to Her Majesty Queen VICTORIA] [naming the times when such letters of denization have been granted respectively, or the year or years in which such Act or Acts of naturalisation, or such Colonial Acts or Ordinances, have passed respectively], and that no foreigner, directly or indirectly, hath any share or part interest in the said ship or vessel."

17. And be it Enacted, That notwithstanding that by the said recited Act for the registering of British vessels, it is enacted, that in case any ship, not being duly registered, shall exercise any of the privileges of a British vessel, the same shall be forfeited, nevertheless all boats or vessels under fifteen tons burden, wholly owned and navigated by British subjects, although not registered as British ships, shall be admitted to be British vessels in all navigation in the rivers and upon the coasts of the United Kingdom, or of the British possessions abroad, and not proceeding over sea, except within the limits of the respective Colonial Governments within which the managing owners of such vessels respectively reside; and that all boats or vessels wholly owned and navigated by British subjects, not exceeding the burden of thirty tons, and not having a whale or fixed deck, and being employed solely in fishing on the banks and shores of Newfoundland, and of the parts adjacent, or on the banks and shores of the provinces of Canada, Nova Scotia, or New Brunswick, adjacent to the Gulf of Saint Lawrence, or on the north of Cape Canso, or of the islands within the same, or in trading coastwise within the said limits, shall be admitted to be British boats or vessels, although not registered, so long as such boats or vessels shall be solely so employed.

18. INDIA.—And be it Enacted, That nothing in this Act contained shall be taken in any way to alter or repeal an Act passed in the thirty-seventh year of the reign of King GEORGE the Third, intituled, "An Act for regulating the Trade to be carried on with the British Possessions in India, by the Ships of Nations in Amity with his Majesty;" nor to repeal or alter

an Act passed in the Session of Parliament holden in the third and fourth years of the reign of Her present Majesty, intituled, " An Act further to regulate the Trade of Ships built and trading within the Limits of the East India Company's Charter."

19. And be it Enacted, That this Act shall come into operation on the *First day of January, One thousand eight hundred and forty-nine.*

20. And be it Enacted, That this Act may be amended or repealed by any Act to be passed in the present Session of Parliament.

APPENDIX, B.

Extracts from Statutes of the Realm, vol. ii., p. 18, translated from the Norman French, printed 1816, by Command of King George III., &c.

ANNO 1381.—5 RIC. II., STAT. 1, c. iii.

" *Item*, to increase the navy of England, which is now greatly diminished. It is assented and accorded, that none of the King's liege people do from henceforth ship any merchandise in going out or coming within the realm of England [in any port], but only in ships of the King's liegance; and every person of the said liegance which after the feast of Easter next ensuing, at which feast this ordinance shall first begin to hold place, do ship and merchandise in any other ship or vessels upon the sea than of the said liegance, shall forfeit to the King all his merchandises shipped in other vessels, wheresoever they be found hereafter, or the value of the same, of which forfeitures the King will and granteth, that he that duly espieth and duly proveth that any person hath anything forfeited against this ordinance, shall have the third part for his labour of the King's gift."

ANNO 1382.—6 RIC. II., STAT. 1, c. 8.

" *Item*. Though late in the same Parliament it was ordained that none of the King's liege people, after the feast of Easter next coming, should in anywise ship any merchandises or goods to be carried out of the realm of England, or to be brought within the same realm in any ships, upon pain of forfeiture, except in ships of the King's liegance, yet of the assent aforesaid it is ordained and granted that the said ordinance only have place as long as ships of the said liegance in the ports where the said merchants shall happen to dwell be found able and sufficient: so that then they shall be bound to freight the same ships of the King's liegance with their merchandises, under the pain aforesaid, before all other ships; and otherwise it shall be lawful to

the same merchants to hire other ships convenient, and then to freight them with their goods and merchandises, notwithstanding the said first statute."

14 Ric. II. c. 6.—A. D. 1390.

"Item. That all merchants of the realm of England shall freight in the said realm the ships of the said realm, and not strange ships; so that the owners of the said ships take reasonable gains for the freight of the same [issint q̄ les possesso's des ditz niesp̄ preignant resonablement p̄ le frette dicelles].

APPENDIX, C.

PAPER SUBMITTED BY MR. LEFEVRE, SECRETARY OF THE BOARD OF TRADE, TO THE SELECT COMMITTEE ON THE NAVIGATION LAWS, 1847.

A COMPARATIVE VIEW of the NAVIGATION LAW of 1660 and 1847.

I. THE PLANTATION TRADE.

Law in 1660.

Rule 1st. (Conf. 1, 2, 3, and 4, of 1847.)

"No goods or commodities whatsoever shall be imported into or exported out of any islands, plantations, or territories to His Majesty belonging, or in his possession, or which may hereafter belong unto or be in the possession of His Majesty, his heirs and successors, in Asia, Africa, or America, in any other ship or ships, vessel or vessels whatsoever, but in such ships or vessels as do truly and without fraud belong only to the people of England or Ireland, dominion of Wales, or town of Berwick-upon-Tweed, or are of the build of or belonging to any of the said lands, islands, plantations, or territories, as the proprietors and right owners thereof, and whereof the master and three-fourths of the mariners at least are English."—(12 Car. 2, c. 18, s. 1.)

Law in 1847.

Rule 1st. (Conf. 1, of 1660.)

"No goods shall be exported from the United Kingdom to any British possession in Asia, Africa, or America, nor to the islands of Guernsey, Jersey, Alderney, or Sark, except in British ships."—(8 & 9 Vict. c. 88, s. 7.)

N.B.—But vessels belonging to the United States may carry goods from this country to the principal British settlements in the East Indies.—(59 G. 3, c. 54, s. 6.) And it is understood that the Queen may conclude treaties, allowing the same privilege to the ships of other foreign countries, and some such treaties have actually been concluded; *e.g.* with Austria and Russia. (See 8 & 9 Vict. c. 90, s. 9.)

Rule 2nd. (Conf. 5, of 1847.)

“ No sugars, tobacco, cotton-wool, indigoes, ginger, fustic or other dyeing wood, of the growth, production, or manufacture of any English plantations in America, Asia, or Africa, shall be shipped, carried, conveyed, or transported from any of the said English plantations to any land, island, territory, dominion, port, or place whatsoever, other than to such other English plantations as do belong to His Majesty, his heirs and successors, or to the kingdom of England or Ireland, or principality of Wales, or town of Berwick-upon-Tweed, there to be laid on shore.”

“ For every ship or vessel which shall set sail out or from England, Ireland, Wales, or town of Berwick-upon-Tweed, for any English plantation in America, Asia, or Africa, sufficient bond shall be given with one surety to the chief officers of the Custom-house of such port or place from whence the said ship shall set sail, that in case the said ship or vessel shall load any of the said commodities at any of the said English plantations, that the said commodities shall be by the said ship brought to some port of England, Ireland, Wales, or to the port or town of Berwick-upon-Tweed, and shall there unload (*sic*) and put on shore the same, the danger of the seas only excepted; and for all ships coming from any other port or place to any of the aforesaid plantations, who (*sic*) by this Act are permitted to trade there, that the Governor of such English plantations shall, before the said ship or vessel be permitted

Rule 2nd. (Conf. 1, of 1660.)

“ No goods shall be carried from any British possession in Asia, Africa, or America, to any other of such possessions, nor from one part of such possessions to another part of the same, except in British ships.”—(8 & 9 Vict. c. 88, s. 10.)

Rule 3rd. (Conf. 1, of 1660.)

“ No goods shall be imported into any British possession in Asia, Africa, or America, in any foreign ships, unless they be ships of the country of which the goods are the produce, and from which the goods are imported.”—(8 & 9 Vict. c. 88, s. 11.)

N.B.—But Her Majesty may by Order in Council declare that goods, the growth, &c., of any foreign country, may be imported into Hong Kong from the same or any other foreign country in vessels belonging to the same or any other foreign country, and however navigated. (See 8 and 9 Vict. c. 88, s. 12.)

N.B.—2. Her Majesty may by Order in Council declare that goods of any sort, or the produce of any place, not otherwise prohibited than by the Law of Navigation, may be imported into any port or ports of the British possessions abroad, to be named in such Order, from any place in a British ship, and from any place not being a part of the British dominions, in a foreign ship of any country, and however navigated, to be warehoused for exportation only.”—(8 & 9 Vict. c. 88, s. 23.)

to load on board any of the said commodities, take bond, in manner and to the value aforesaid, for each respective ship or vessel, that such ship or vessel shall carry all the aforesaid goods that shall be laden on board in the said ship to some other of His Majesty's English plantations, or to England, Ireland, Wales, or town of Berwick-upon-Tweed."—(12 Car. 2, c. 18, ss. 18, 19.)

Rule 4th. (Conf. 1, of 1660.)

The privileges of trading allowed to foreign ships, under Rule 3, are limited to "the ships of those countries which, having colonial possessions, shall grant the like privileges of trading with those possessions to British ships, or which, not having colonial possessions, shall place the commerce and navigation of this country and of its possessions abroad on the footing of the most favoured nation; unless Her Majesty, by Order in Council, shall in any case deem it expedient to grant the whole or any of such privileges to the ships of any foreign country, although the conditions aforesaid shall not in all respects be fulfilled by such foreign country."—(8 & 9 Vict. c. 93, s. 4.)

Rule 5th. (Conf. 2, of 1660.)

"No goods shall be imported into, nor shall any goods, except the produce of the fisheries, in British ships, be exported from any of the British possessions in America by sea, from or to any place other than the United Kingdom, or some other of such possessions, except into or from the several ports in such possessions called 'Free Ports.'"—(8 & 9 Vict. c. 93, s. 2.)

N.B.—This applies to the Mauritius as well as the American possessions. (*Ibid.* s. 62.) The trade of other colonies is regulated by the Queen. (*Ibid.* s. 90.) Goods may be imported by inland navigation into any place where there is a Custom-house. (*Ibid.* s. 45.) The rule is not to extend "to prohibit the importation or exportation of goods into or from any ports or

places in Newfoundland or Labrador in British ships," and certain articles may be imported from Guernsey and Jersey into places whence the fishery is carried on, though the same be not free ports. (*Ibid.* a. 2.)

INTERMEDIATE HISTORY OF THE LAW.

The Act of 1660, as appears from the foregoing summary, established two rules applicable to the plantation trade: first, that the whole trade of the plantations should be carried on in British ships; and, secondly, that the principal productions of the plantations should be allowed to be exported only to the mother-country or some other plantation. A third general rule was introduced a year or two later by the Act 15 Car. 2, c. 7, a. 6; viz., that no goods of the produce of Europe should be imported into any of the plantations in Asia, Africa, or America (except Tangier), but such as were *bond fide* and without fraud laden and shipped in England, Wales, or the town of Berwick-upon-Tweed, and in English-built shipping. The history of the Navigation Law, during the period which has elapsed since the Act of 1660, may most conveniently be collected under the heads of these three rules.

RULE I.—The principle of the exclusion of foreign ships from the plantation trade was maintained entire until the year 1786; but in the interval several alterations were made in the definition of English shipping, for which, as the subject is one that seems to require separate discussion, see *Note (A)*.

In the year 1786 the Act commonly called the "Free Port Act" (6 G. 3, c. 49) was passed, the intention of which is said to have been the legalising, so far as we were concerned, the illicit but profitable trade then carried on between some of our West India islands and the Spanish colonies. It permits, with certain exceptions, the produce (but not the manufactures) of foreign colonies in America to be imported into certain specified ports in Dominica and Jamaica respectively, in foreign one-decked vessels. It also permits the re-exportation from the same ports to foreign places, in foreign one-decked vessels, of any goods legally imported into the said islands from Great Britain, Ireland, or the British possessions in America, with, however, certain exceptions. The Act contains a variety of restrictions upon the trade of these two islands, as well with other colonies as with foreign ports, in order to prevent any general infringement of our colonial system through the exceptional treatment of these places. In 1773 the Act which was then expiring was continued so far as regarded Dominica, but not for Jamaica, till 1780, by statute 13 G. 3, c. 78, which also adds some regulations as to

the trade of Dominica. In the following year it was continued for Jamaica also by 14 G. 3, c. 41. In 1781 it was further continued for Jamaica, but not for Dominica, by 21 G. 3, c. 29. In 1787 the Act was repealed by 27 G. 3, c. 27, and new provisions were made, by which it was made legal to import into certain ports in Jamaica, Grenada, Dominica, and the Bahamas any wool, cotton-wool, indigo, and a variety of other articles therein enumerated, being the growth or production of any colonies in America belonging to a foreign European sovereign or state, from such colonies, in foreign one-decked vessels not exceeding 70 tons burthen, and owned and navigated by the subjects of any foreign European sovereign or state. These articles might be re-exported to Great Britain and Ireland. It was also made legal for foreign ships of the same description to export from the same ports to foreign parts rum the produce of any British island, and all manner of goods (with some exceptions) legally imported into the place of export. The Act contained several precautionary regulations. In 1790 the restriction as to tonnage was taken off (30 G. 3, c. 29); and in the same year the privilege granted to the subjects of foreign European States was extended to all the inhabitants of the colonies in question by 30 G. 3, c. 38. Some amendments of detail were made in the Act of 1787 by the statutes 33 G. 3, c. 50, s. 8 (adding tobacco to the list of enumerated articles), and 38 G. 3, c. 39 (removing a prohibition against exporting European goods from the islands in question to other British colonies). In 1792 the Act of 1787 was made perpetual by 32 G. 3, c. 37. In the same year power was given to his Majesty to appoint free ports in the Bahamas and Bermuda islands (which was subsequently given for the Caicos likewise), for the importation of foreign sugar and coffee, 32 G. 3, c. 43, and see 33 G. 3, c. 50, s. 10; and by subsequent Acts (33 G. 3, c. 50, s. 1; 36 G. 3, c. 55; 37 G. 3, c. 77; 41 G. 3, c. 97; 41 G. 3, st. 2, c. 23; 42 G. 3, c. 102; and 43 G. 3, c. 133) several other ports were added to the list of free ports. In 1805 the whole of these Acts were repealed, and fresh provisions made by statute 45 G. 3, c. 57, but this is apparently little more than a consolidation of the then existing law. In 1808 rice, grain, and flour were added to the list of articles allowed to be imported into the free ports by 48 G. 3, c. 125. In 1810 the restriction of the privilege to one-decked vessels was removed by 50 G. 3, c. 21.

It will be observed that none of the legislation above cited on this point allows the vessels of the United States, after the recognition of their independence, to engage in the trade of our plantations. For the legislation on this subject, see the Note on the trade with the United States (*infra*).

Some further changes in the law as to the admission of foreign vessels into the plantation trade, will be found under the two following heads. The following statutes may also be referred to:—

52 G. 3, c. 99, allowing the exportation of salt from the Bahamas in foreign vessels.

54 G. 3, c. 72, allowing Dutch vessels to trade between Holland and the colonies ceded to this country by Holland in South America.

RULE II.—The following articles were at several times added to the list of produce which was only to be exported from the colonies to the mother-country, or some other plantation:—Rice and molasses (by 3 & 4 Ann. c. 5) ; copper ore (by 8 G. 1, c. 18, s. 22) ; coffee, pimento, cocoa-nuts, whale-fins, raw silk, hides and skins, and pot and pearl ashes (by 4 G. 3, c. 15, s. 27).

The Act of 1660 allowed the exports to the mother-country to be to England or Ireland. By 15 Car. 2, c. 7, s. 9, however, they were confined to England and Wales. By the fourth article of the Act of Union (5 Ann. c. 8) Scotland was admitted to a share in the plantation trade, and consequently exports might be made to Scotland. By 4 G. 2, c. 15, it was provided that goods not included in the list of enumerated articles, might be exported from the colonies to Ireland ; but by 5 G. 2, c. 9, it was declared that this permission did not extend to hops. The Act 20, G. 3, c. 10, places Ireland on the same footing with Great Britain as regards both the import and export trade of the British plantations in America and Africa, provided the Irish Parliament maintain an equality in the duties, drawbacks, &c., in certain cases. As respects the inter-colonial trade in the enumerated articles, it should be noticed that by 25 Car. 2, c. 7, s. 2, it is provided that if masters of ships do not, on exporting any of those articles from any of the colonies, give bond that they shall be carried to England, they shall pay certain duties upon them. This amounts in substance to the imposition of duties on the inter-colonial trade, for it is declared by 7 & 8 W. 3, c. 22, s. 8, that it does not imply a permission to export the goods to foreign countries. By 4 G. 3, c. 15, s. 28, it is made illegal to export iron and lumber from British North America to any part of Europe, except Great Britain ; but by 5 G. 3, c. 45, s. 22, it is declared that such iron may be exported to Ireland, and such lumber to Madera, the Azores, or any place south of Cape Finisterre. The Act 6 G. 3, c. 52, s. 30, provides that bond must be given on the exportation of any non-enumerated goods, that they shall not be landed in any part of Europe north of Cape Finisterre except Great Britain ; but by 7 G. 3, c. 2, they may be landed in Ireland.

The principal exceptions made to the rule affecting the enumerated articles are in the cases of rice and sugar, the staple produce of some of the American plantations.

By G. 2, c. 28, it was made lawful for British subjects to export rice in British ships from Carolina (and by 8 G. 2, c. 19, from Georgia) to parts of Europe south of Cape Finisterre ; and by 4 G. 3, c. 7, and 5, G. 3, c. 45, a. 10, it was made lawful to carry rice from these colonies to any part of America lying south of Georgia.

By 12 G. 2, c. 30, it is provided that ships owned by British subjects, of whom the greater part are residents in Great Britain, and the rest either in Great Britain or the sugar colonies (this restriction was removed by 15 G. 2, c. 33, s. 5), and duly built and navigated, may clear out from a port in Great Britain, under licence from the Commissioners of Customs, for the sugar colonies, and may there take on board a cargo of British plantation sugar ;

and, after touching at a port in Great Britain, may carry the same to any part of Europe, returning to Great Britain within eight months after its delivery, and before again proceeding to any colony. If the sugar is to be taken to any place south of Cape Finisterre, the ship need not touch at a port in Great Britain. No tobacco, molasses, ginger, cotton, wool, indigo, fustic or other dyeing wood, tar, pitch, turpentine, hemp, masts, yards, bowsprits, copper ore, beaver skins or other furs, the growth, &c., of any British plantation in America, are to be taken on board such vessel, except as stores. The Act does not authorise carrying sugar to Ireland. This Act was repealed by 34 G. 3, c. 42, s. 7, passed about the time that the importation of foreign sugar into our colonies was first permitted (*vide supra*).—It had never been of any practical effect, the home market having been more attractive than the foreign. It was, however, partially revived by 48 G. 3, c. 69, which allows British subjects (but no other persons) to export in British ships, duly licensed for the purpose, any sugar or coffee (or cocoa, 50 G. 3, c. 13, s. 8), the growth of the British possessions in America, to places in Europe south of Cape Finisterre, and to re-import corn from such places, or from the North of Africa.

On the revision of our commercial system in 1822, the Acts 3 G. 4, c. 44, s. 4, and c. 45, s. 2, permitted the exportation of all the produce of the colonies, and of any article legally imported thereinto, to any place in Europe, Africa, or America:—to places in America, either in British ships or in ships of the country to which the goods are exported; and to places in Europe or Africa, in British ships only.

In the year 1825, upon the general consolidation of the Customs laws, the above limitations of the right of exportation were removed, and the law in this respect placed pretty much on the same footing on which it now stands. The subsequent consolidations of 1833 and 1845 make little change in it.

RULE III.—The rule that goods the produce of Europe were only to be imported into the colonies from the United Kingdom was originally subject only to the following exceptions: salt might be taken to the fisheries from any part of Europe; wines of Madeira and the Azores might be imported thence; servants and horses might be imported from Scotland and Ireland; and so might provisions, being of the produce of Scotland and Ireland respectively. The first relaxation of this rule was made in favour of Irish linens, by 3 & 4 Ann, c. 8, which allowed natives of England or Ireland to take Irish linens from any port in Ireland to the plantations, in English-built shipping, whereof the master and three-fourths of the mariners, at least, were English or Irish. The liberty of importing salt from foreign places in Europe, which had originally been granted only to New England and Newfoundland, was extended to Pennsylvania by 13 G. 1, c. 5, to New York by 3 G. 2, c. 12, to Nova Scotia by 2, G. 3, c. 24, and to Quebec by 4 G. 3, c. 19. These last relaxations were made for the sake of the fisheries. On the same account permission was given by 9 G. 3, c. 28, to export from Guernsey and

Jersey to the fisheries any craft, clothing, or other goods of British manufacture, and any food or victuals of British produce, that might be necessary for the same.

By 46 G. 3, c. 116, it was made lawful to carry fruit, wine, oil, salt, and cork, the produce of Europe, from Gibraltar or Malta to the North American colonies in British vessels; and by 55 G. 3, c. 29, it was made lawful to carry a great number of articles from Malta (and afterwards from Gibraltar under 57 G. 3, c. 4) to any of the British possessions in America. By the same Acts the export of certain other articles from the colonies to Malta and Gibraltar was also permitted.

By 49 G. 3, c. 47, it was made lawful to carry fruit, wine, salt, and oil, the produce of Europe, from ports in Europe, south of Cape Finisterre, to certain ports in British North America, in British ships, which had brought British North American produce or fish to those ports. This Act was repealed, so far as related to salt, by 50 G. 3, c. 60, but was afterwards amended, and salt was replaced in the list of articles by 51 G. 3, c. 97. By 57 G. 3, c. 89, it was made lawful to export oranges and lemons from the Azores and Madeira to the British North American colonies in any British ship.

The 8th section of the Act 3 G. 4, c. 45 (one of the Acts already adverted to), permits the importation of a number of articles from foreign ports in Europe or Africa, into the British possessions in America, but only in British ships.

By the Act 6 G. 4, c. 73, the importation of all classes of goods, except a few prohibited articles, was permitted from any place except places within the limits of the East India Company's charter, into all the free ports of the British possessions in America, except Newfoundland, to which the Act did not apply, and the importation might be either in British vessels or in vessels of the producing country.

In the same year (1825) the first consolidation of the Customs laws took place, and the law was then put on very much the same footing in this respect as that in which it now stands; that is to say, the importation and exportation of all classes of goods into or from the free ports was generally legalised, subject to certain prohibitions against the importation of particular articles, some of which have since been removed, whilst others (*e. g.* those against pirated books, counterfeit coin, &c., and the restrictions on gunpowder, arms, &c.) still remain. A tariff of differential duties was imposed upon foreign goods, of which duties one-tenth (subsequently increased to one-fourth) was to be remitted when the goods were imported through an English warehouse. The principle of this tariff, and of the remission, is still retained, but has been materially modified by the Act of last Session (9 & 10 Vict. c. 94), which empowers the colonial legislatures, with the assent of the Queen in Council, to alter it.

NOTE ON TRADE WITH THE UNITED STATES.

The statutes regulating the trade of this country and its possessions with the United States of America are of peculiar interest, and deserve separate consideration, inasmuch as the alteration of our relations consequent upon the acknowledgment of the independence of those States, produced some of the most important alterations that have been made in our navigation system.

At the time of the commencement of the War of Independence the chief regulations as to the trade of the American colonies were these (subject in each case to a few exceptions) :—

1. They could import or export nothing in any but British vessels.
2. They could not export the most important articles of their produce to any part of Europe other than Great Britain.
3. They could import no goods from any part of Europe other than Great Britain.

On the breaking out of the war the statutes 14 G. 3, c. 19; 15 G. 3, c. 10; 15 G. 3, c. 18; and 16 G. 3, c. 5, were successively passed, with the view, first, of restricting, and then of wholly prohibiting the trade between this country and her rebellious colonies. The prohibition was taken off in 1783 (by 23 G. 3, c. 26), and by an Act of that year (23 G. 3, c. 39), the King was empowered to regulate the trade with the United States by Order in Council. This power, combined with occasional legislation on particular points (*see* 25 G. 3, c. 1; 27 G. 3, c. 7), was continued by annual Acts till 1788, when the trade between the United States and the British possessions in America was placed under the permanent regulations by the Act 28 G. 3, c. 6, the power of making orders for their trade with this country being still continued to the King in Council.

The main provisions of the Act 28 G. 3, c. 6, were as follow :—

(1.) No goods were to be imported into the British West Indies from the United States, except about thirty enumerated articles, being of the growth, produce, or manufacture of the States; and those were only to be imported by British subjects and in British ships.

(2.) Such enumerated articles were not to be imported into the British West Indies from the Foreign West Indies; but Governors might relax this prohibition in cases of public emergency. [By a subsequent Act (31 G. 3, c. 38), foreign colonies on the continent of South America were assimilated to the foreign West Indies, in respect of their trade with our possessions. But Brazilian goods were admitted by 51 G. 3, c. 47, s. 6; and see an extension of this permission by 58 G. 3, c. 27.]

(3.) Such goods as might by law be exported from the West Indies to places in Europe, as also certain other goods (sugar, coffee, &c.), might be exported therefrom to the United States, but only by British subjects and in British ships.

United States vessels, however, coming in ballast, might export salt from Turk's Islands (and by a subsequent Act, 44 G. 3, c. 101, from certain other ports), but the trade of Turk's Islands was at the same time placed under considerable restrictions.

(4.) No goods whatever might be imported from the United States into New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Cape Breton, St. John's, or Newfoundland, nor by sea into the province of Quebec; but provisions were made for cases of emergency.

Such were the provisions of the law as regarded the trade with the colonies. The trade between this country and the United States continued to be regulated by Orders in Council till 1797, when the Act 37 G. 3, c. 97, was passed, in order to carry out the commercial treaty then recently concluded. The main provision of this Act was, that all articles of the growth, produce, or manufacture of the United States (not being such as were generally prohibited by law) might be imported into Great Britain [extended to Ireland, 41 G. 3, c. 95] directly from the United States, either in British vessels or in vessels of the United States. This provision corresponds exactly with the existing state of the law. A variety of subsequent statutes have been passed, but they relate chiefly to equality of duties on importations in ships of either country. (See 37 G. 3, c. 97, s. 11; 42 G. 3, c. 27; 49 G. 3, c. 59; 56 G. 3, c. 15; 56 G. 3, c. 51; 59 G. 3, c. 54.)

The trade between the United States and the British colonies was, however, subjected to further regulations by subsequent statutes, such as 37 G. 3, c. 97, s. 22, permitting them to trade with the East Indies; and 47 G. 3, sess. 2, c. 38; 49 G. 3, c. 49; 52 G. 3, c. 55, regulating their trade with our North American possessions.

In 1822 the trade was materially opened by the Act 3 G. 4, c. 44, which was passed for the regulation of the trade between the British possessions in America and the West Indies, and other places in America and the West Indies. It was thereby made legal to import into certain ports in the West Indies and other British possessions in America, from the United States, a much greater number of articles the produce of the United States, and that either in British or in American vessels. The produce of the British possessions, as well as foreign goods which had been legally imported thereinto, might be exported from the same ports to the United States either in British or American vessels. These provisions, it should be remarked, applied generally to the trade of our possessions with other foreign States in America, and not only to that with the United States. Power was, however, reserved to the King in Council to prohibit intercourse with such foreign States as might not treat us on a footing of reciprocity. The Act allowed certain foreign vessels, though not of the build of the countries to which they belonged, to engage in the trade with such countries for ten years. Articles legally imported under the Act might be re-exported in British ships to other British possessions. Power was given to the King to add to the list of free ports.

An Act of the same session (3 G. 4, c. 119) permits certain goods of the United States to be imported by land into Canada, and permits goods to be exported thence to the United States.

The present freedom of trade was not conceded to the colonies till 1825.

II. TRADE WITH ASIA, AFRICA, AND AMERICA.

Law in 1660.

Rule 1st.

“ No goods or commodities whatsoever, of the growth, production, or manufacture of Africa, Asia, or America, or of any part thereof, or which are described or laid down in the usual maps or cards of those places [shall] be imported into England, Ireland, Wales, islands of Guernsey and Jersey, or town of Berwick-upon-Tweed, in any other ship or ships, vessel or vessels whatsoever, but in such as do truly and without fraud belong only to the people of England or Ireland, dominion of Wales, or town of Berwick-upon-Tweed, or of the lands, islands, plantations, or territories in Asia, Africa, or America, to His Majesty belonging, as the proprietors and right owners thereof, and whereof the master and three-fourths at least of the mariners are English.”—(12 Car. 2, c. 18, s. 8.)

Rule 2nd.

“ No goods or commodities that are of foreign growth, production, or manufacture, and which are to be brought into England, Ireland, Wales, the islands of Guernsey and Jersey, or town of Berwick-upon-Tweed, in English-built shipping, or other shipping belonging to some of the aforesaid places, and navigated by English mariners as aforesaid, shall be shipped or brought from any other place or

Law in 1847.

Rule 1st.

“ Goods, the produce of Asia, Africa, or America, shall not be imported into the United Kingdom, to be used therein, in foreign ships, unless they be the ships of the country in Asia, Africa, or America, of which the goods are the produce, and from which they are imported, except the goods hereinafter mentioned; (that is to say),

1. “ Goods, the produce of the dominions of the Grand Seignior in Asia or Africa, which may be imported from his dominions in Europe in ships of his dominions:

2. “ Raw silk and mohair yarn, the produce of Asia, which may be imported from the dominions of the Grand Seignior in the Levant seas in ships of his dominions.

3. “ Bullion:

“ Provided always, that in case any treaty shall be made with any country having a port or ports within the Straits of Gibraltar, stipulating that such productions of Asia or Africa as may by law be imported into the United Kingdom, from places in Europe within the Straits of Gibraltar in British ships [see next rule], shall also be imported from the ports of such country in

places, country or countries, but only from those of the said growth, production, or manufacture, or from those ports where the said goods and commodities can only, or are, or usually have been, first shipped for transportation, and from none other places or countries."—(12 Car. 2, c. 18, s. 4.)

N.B.—But the Act is "not to restrain and prohibit the importation of any of the commodities of the Straights or Levant seas, loaden in English-built shipping, and whereof the master and three-fourths of the mariners at least are English, from the usual ports or places for lading of them heretofore within the said Straights or Levant seas, though the said commodities be not of the very growth of the said places."—(s. 12.)

N.B. 2.—Nor is it to restrain "the importing of any East India commodities loaden in English-built shipping, and whereof the master and three-fourths of the mariners at least are English, from the usual place or places for lading of them in any part of those seas to the southward and eastward of Cabo bona Esperanza, although the said ports be not the very places of their growth."—(s. 13.)

N.B. 3.—It is lawful for "the people of England, Ireland, Wales, islands of Guernsey or Jersey, or town of Berwick-upon-Tweed, in vessels or ships to them belonging, and whereof the master and three-fourths of the mariners at least are English, to load and bring in from any of the ports of Spain or Portugal, or Western Islands, commonly called Azores, or Madeira,

the ships of such country, then, and in every such case, it shall be lawful to import such goods from the ports of such country in the ships of such country."—(8 & 9 Vict. c. 88, s. 4.)

N.B.—But such goods, not being otherwise prohibited, may be warehoused for exportation.

Rule 2nd.

" Goods, the produce of Asia, Africa, or America, shall not be imported from Europe into the United Kingdom to be used therein, except the goods hereinafter mentioned; (that is to say),

" Goods, the produce of the dominions of the Emperor of Morocco, which may be imported from places in Europe within the Straits of Gibraltar:

" Goods, the produce of Asia or Africa, which (having been brought into places in Europe within the Straits of Gibraltar, from or through places in Asia or Africa within those Straits, and not by way of the Atlantic Ocean) may be imported from places in Europe within the Straits of Gibraltar:

" Goods, the produce of places within the limits of the East India Company's charter, which (having been imported from those places into Gibraltar or Malta in British ships) may be imported from Gibraltar or Malta:

" Goods taken by way of reprisal by British ships:

or Canary Islands, all sorts of goods or commodities of the growth, production, or manufacture of the plantations or dominions of either of them respectively."—(s. 14.)

N.B. 4.—The Act does not extend to "bullion, nor yet to any goods taken by way of reprisal by any ship or ships belonging to England, Ireland, or Wales, islands of Guernsey or Jersey, or town of Berwick-upon-Tweed, and whereof the master and three-fourths of the mariners at least are English, having commission from His Majesty, his heirs or successors."—

(s. 15.)

"Bullion, diamonds, pearls, rubies, emeralds, and other jewels or precious stones."—(8 & 9 Vict. c. 88, s. 3.)

N.B.—The Lords of the Treasury may permit "any goods the produce of the British possessions or fisheries in North America, which shall have been legally imported into the islands of Guernsey or Jersey direct from such possessions, to be imported into the United Kingdom for home use direct from those islands, under such regulations as [they] shall direct."—(8 & 9 Vict. c. 86, s. 44.)

INTERMEDIATE HISTORY OF THE LAW.

The two principles laid down with regard to the trade with Asia, Africa, and America, viz., that all importations from those quarters should be in British ships, and that they should be from the place of the origin of the goods, are still maintained to a certain extent: that is to say, the produce of those quarters can only be imported in British ships, or in ships of the country of origin, being also the country of export; and no such produce can be imported in an unmanufactured state from any part of Europe.

The first decided infringement of the former principle, that of confining the trade to British ships, took place upon the conclusion of the treaty of 1796 with the United States of America, the effect of which, as carried out by the Act 37 G. 3, c. 97, has been already noticed in the Note on the United States trade. Vessels of the United States were thereby permitted to bring the produce of their own country (not being such as was generally prohibited) directly to Great Britain. [The provisions of this Act were re-enacted by 41 G. 3, c. 95, in order to extend the same right of commercial intercourse to Ireland.] An additional duty of £.10 per cent. was charged upon certain articles, when imported in American vessels, over and above the duty payable on them when imported in British vessels; but by a subsequent Act (42 G. 3, c. 27) power was given to the King to suspend those duties by Order in Council, the intention being simply to countervail the differential duties imposed by the Americans on goods imported in British ships.

In 1808 the same privilege which had been granted to the United States

was extended to the inhabitants of the Portuguese possessions in South America by the Act 48 G. 3, c. 11, which allowed the produce of those territories (not being of a nature generally prohibited to be imported from foreign countries) to be imported thence into Great Britain and Ireland in vessels built in those territories, or made prize by Portuguese ships, and owned and navigated by Portuguese subjects resident in the said territories. After the conclusion of our treaty with Portugal in 1810, this Act was repealed, and the Act 51 G. 3, c. 47, substituted for it, which extended the above facilities to all Portuguese-built vessels or prizes, owned and navigated by Portuguese subjects, without requiring that they should be residents in America.

On the revision of the Customs Laws in 1822, the principle that the produce of Asia, Africa, and America should only be imported for consumption in British ships was still maintained, but the above exceptions in favour of the United States and Portuguese colonies were preserved, and were also extended (3 G. 4, c. 43, s. 3) to countries in America or the West Indies, being, or having been, under the dominion of Spain.

The existing rule was established at the consolidation of 1825.

As respects the principle that the produce of Asia, Africa, and America was only to be imported into this country from the place of its origin, it will be remarked, first, that the old law recognised the doctrine now explicitly laid down in the 5th section of the Navigation Act, that goods manufactured in any country should be held to be the produce of that country, even though made from materials produced elsewhere. Not long afterwards, however, this doctrine was abandoned in the case of thrown silk, the object being to discourage the silk-throwing of Italy, which was injurious to our own manufactures. By 2 W. & M. c. 9, Asiatic silk thrown in Italy or elsewhere is not to be deemed a manufacture of the country where thrown, and its importation, except from the place of its growth, is consequently prohibited. By the same Act the importation of thrown silk from all countries except Italy and Sicily is altogether prohibited. But by 10 G. 3, c. 48, this, which was at first merely an exception applicable to a particular case, became a general rule: it was thereby enacted, that the produce of Asia, Africa, and America, manufactured in any foreign country, should not be imported into Great Britain, unless manufactured in the country of its growth, or in the place whence such goods can only be, or are, first shipped. The prohibition was not to extend to the case of certain oils, nor to that of commodities of which the importation is permitted by Acts passed subsequently to the Navigation Law. This rule was maintained until the consolidation of 1825, when the present one was substituted, by 6 G. 4, c. 109, s. 5.

By the Act 7 Ann, c. 8, it was made lawful to import drugs, the produce of America, from any British possession, and at the same rate of duty as if imported direct; and conversely, by 22 G. 3, c. 28, it was afterwards made legal to import tobacco of the British plantations from any country in

America in amity with His Majesty. The importation of cochineal and indigo was permitted from any place in British ships, or ships of countries in amity with us, by the Acts 13 G. 1, c. 15, and 7 G. 2, c. 18, respectively; and the importation of several articles—gum Senegal, coarse calicoes for the African trade, cotton wool, goat skins, &c.—from any place, was permitted by the Acts 25 G. 2, c. 32; 5 G. 3, c. 30; 5 G. 3, c. 52, s. 20; and 15 G. 3, c. 35, ss. 1, 2.

By the Act 14 G. 2, c. 36, the Russia Company were allowed to import in British shipping from any Russian ports any commodities of the growth of Persia, purchased by barter with woollen or other commodities (but not with gold or silver, either in coin or bullion), exported from Great Britain to Russia, and thence carried into Persia, or with the produce arising from the sale thereof. By a subsequent Act, 23 G. 2, c. 34, the necessity for carrying the British goods, or the produce arising from their sale, into Persia, was done away, and it was made legal to import Persian goods purchased in Russia.

By 20 G. 3, c. 45, the Turkey Company were allowed to import any goods which had theretofore been usually imported from the Turkish dominions within the Levant seas, from any port or place whatsoever, and either in British ships or in ships of countries in amity with us and navigated by foreign seamen; subject, however, to the payment of aliens' duty if the ships were of foreign build. By 37 G. 3, c. 84, the privilege of importing Levant goods from any place and in any ships of countries in amity was made general for a limited time; but this was one of a great number of Acts passed during time of war, relaxing the Navigation Laws in particular points when they could not be strictly carried out, which it is perhaps unnecessary minutely to describe. The following statutes may be referred to as instances of such relaxation:—39 G. 3, c. 95; 39 & 40 G. 3, c. 34; 41 G. 3, c. 97; 42 G. 3, c. 95, s. 9; 45 G. 3, c. 34.

By the Act 27 G. 3, c. 19, s. 11, it was made lawful to import into this country from Gibraltar in British ships, the produce of Morocco imported into Gibraltar from places not lying to the southward of Mogadore; and see 3 G. 4, c. 43, s. 9.

The Act 7 G. 1, st. 1, c. 21, provided that no goods the produce of places within the limits of the East India Company's charter should be imported into Ireland, the Channel Islands, or the British possessions in Africa or America, except from Great Britain. This rule continued in force (except as regards Ireland) till the consolidation of 1825.

By 33 G. 3, c. 63, it was made lawful to import the produce of places in Asia, Africa, or America, not being within the limits of the Company's charter, into Great Britain from Ireland.

The sections in the Act of 1822, 3 G. 4, c. 43, which relate to this portion of the subject, are the 2nd, the 8th, and the 9th. They prescribe pretty much the same regulations as those which at present exist; that is to say, the 2nd

section limits the restriction as to the places whence the produce of Asia, Africa, and America may be brought, to a prohibition against importing it from Europe; and the 8th and 9th sections establish the exceptions as to the dominions of the Grand Seignior, &c., very nearly in the same terms as the exceptions in the present law.

NOTE ON THE EAST INDIA TRADE.

The trade with the East Indies has always been treated as exceptional. The exclusive right of trading within certain limits long enjoyed by the Company, and the peculiar nature of the Company's jurisdiction, have no doubt contributed to render it so.

The two points most worthy of notice are, 1st, the concession of the rights of British ships to ships not fulfilling all the usual requisites of the law; an^d, 2nd, the admission of certain foreign ships to an equality in some respects with British ships.

On the first point reference should be made to the statute 21 G. 3, c. 65 s. 33, which provided that ships belonging to the East India Company should be held to be British-owned, although the stock of the Company was held by a considerable proportion of foreigners.

The next important statute is 35 G. 3, c. 115 (continued by 42 G. 3, c. 20), which allows to ships, built within the territories of the Company, or in places in the East Indies under British protection, and owned by the Company, the privileges of British ships in trade with India, though such ships be not British-built or duly registered. When the exclusive privileges of the Company were broken in upon (by 53 G. 3, c. 155) the same privilege was allowed to be extended to similarly circumstanced vessels, the property of private individuals, by Order in Council (s. 30). This privilege was continued by 54 G. 3, c. 35. But by 53 G. 3, c. 116, the registry laws of this country were extended to India, and from that time nothing but British-built ships were to be entitled to the privileges of British vessels. Exceptions were made as to ships under 350 tons burthen, and also as to ships the property of British subjects, and built or building before 1st January, 1816; but these classes of ships were only to be employed in trade within the limits of the Company's charter.

This Act was repealed by the statutes 4 G. 4, c. 41, and 4 G. 4, c. 80, which extended the British law of registry to India without any exception. But by 6 G. 4, c. 110, provision was again made for the trade of ships built prior to 1816, and having continued in the possession of British owners ever since; and by a subsequent Act (3 & 4 Vict., c. 56), which is still in force, the Governor-General in Council has power to declare all ships built within the limits of the charter, and owned by Her Majesty's subjects for whom he has the power to legislate, to be entitled to the privileges of British ships within those limits. By the fourth section of the same Act the Governor-General has the power of conferring the same privileges on ships

belonging to States in subordinate alliance, or having subsidiary treaties with the East India Company.

With regard to the navigation of East India ships, it is sufficient to notice that by the 20th sec. of 4 G. 4, c. 80 (still in force), as well as by the sec. of the Navigation Act, Lascars and other natives of Asia are not to be deemed British seamen. But by sec. 21 of the above-mentioned Act, any number of Lascars may be employed, provided only that there be four British seamen to every hundred tons of the vessel's burden; and by sec. 23, it appears that British seamen need not be employed in certain voyages within the limits of the charter.

On the subject of the privileges granted to the vessels of foreign countries in the trade with India, reference must be made to the Act 37 G. 3, c. 117 (still in force, or at least still unrepealed), which authorises the Directors of the East India Company, subject to the approval of the Board of Control, to make such regulations as they think fit with respect to the trade to be carried on in ships of countries in amity with Her Majesty.

Notice should also be taken of the Act 59 G. 3, c. 54, s. 6, permitting vessels of the United States to clear out from this country for the principal British settlements in the East Indies, which Act is still in force, and is further extended by 8 & 9 Vict., c. 90, s. 9. And reference must also be made to the fourth section of the Act 3 & 4 Vict., c. 56, above quoted.

See also 41 G. 3, c. 37, which allowed rice and other grain to be imported into this country from India, in the ships of any country in amity, however navigated.

III. TRADE WITH EUROPE.

Law in 1660.

“ No goods or commodities of the growth, production, or manufacture of Muscovy, or of any of the countries, dominions, or territories to the Great Duke or Emperor of Muscovy or Russia belonging; also no sort of masts, timber, or boards, no foreign salt, pitch, tar, rosin, hemp or flax, raisins, figs, prunes, olive oils, no sorts of corn or grain, sugar, pot-ashes, wines, vinegar, or spirits, called aqua-vite, or brandy-wine, shall be imported into England, Ireland, Wales, or town of Berwick-upon-Tweed, in any ship or ships,

Law in 1847.

“ The several sorts of goods hereinafterenumerated, being the produce of Europe (that is to say), masts, timber, boards, tar, tallow, hemp, flax, currants, raisins, figs, prunes, olive oil, corn or grain, wine, brandy, tobacco, wool, shumac, madders, madder-roots, barilla, brimstone, bark of oak, cork, oranges, lemons, linseed, rape-seed, and clover-seed, shall not be imported into the United Kingdom to be used therein, except in British ships, or in ships of the country of which the goods are the produce, or in ships of the country

vessel or vessels whatsoever, but in such as do truly and without fraud belong to the people thereof, or some of them, as the true owners and proprietors thereof, and whereof the master and three-fourths of the mariners at least are English; and no currants nor commodities of the growth, production, or manufacture of any of the countries, islands, dominions, or territories to the Ottoman or Turkish empire belonging, shall be imported into any of the aforementioned places in any ship or vessel but which is of English build, and navigated as aforesaid, and in no other, except only such foreign ships and vessels as are of the build of that country or place of which the said goods are the growth, production, or manufacture respectively, or of such port where the said goods can only be, or most usually are, first shipped for transportation, and whereof the master and three-fourths of the mariners at least are of the said country or place."—(12 Car. 2, c. 18, s. 8.)

N.B.—The exception which is placed in italics was held to apply to the whole clause, and not to Turkish goods only.

N.B. 2.—See also the 2nd rule relating to the trade with Asia, Africa, and America, and the 1st and 4th notes thereon, all which partially apply to the European trade likewise.

INTERMEDIATE HISTORY OF THE LAW.

The rule established by the Navigation Act relative to the European trade was considered unsatisfactory for two reasons: first, because it permitted British ships to import European goods from any part of Europe, though

from which the goods are imported."—(9 & 9 Vict., c. 88, s. 2.)

N.B.—But such goods, not being otherwise prohibited, may be warehoused for exportation, though brought in other ships."—(Ib. s. 22.)

N.B. 2.—Her Majesty may allow ports to be used as national ports by the ships of countries within the dominions of which the ports do not lie, but for the exportation of the produce of which they are convenient outlets."—(See 3 & 4 Vict., c. 95.)

they were not of the growth or produce of that part, and consequently enabled our Dutch rivals to collect all manner of articles in their ports, and thence to send them over to this country, thus competing with us in the longer part of the voyage, and being excluded only from the shorter part; secondly, because it enabled them to do the same with respect to goods from the plantations, provided they subjected them to some manufacturing process so as to give them a Dutch character. To prevent these evasions of the spirit of the law, it was enacted by the Statute of Frauds (13 & 14 Car. 2, c. 11, s. 23), that no sort of wines, other than Rhenish, no sort of spicery, grocery, tobacco, potashes, pitch, tar, salt, rosin, deal boards, fir timber, or olive oil, should be imported into England, Wales, or Berwick, from the Netherlands or Germany, in any sort of ships or vessels whatsoever.

The following are the several instances in which this rule was subsequently relaxed: by 1 Ann, stat. 1, c. 12, s. 112, it was made lawful to import from Hamburg wines the produce of Hungary; by 6 G. 1, c. 15, certain descriptions of German timber may be imported in British ships from German ports; by 22 G. 3, c. 78, drugs, wines, and thrown silk, of Hungary and Germany, may be imported from the Austrian Netherlands, or from any port of Germany, as from the place of their production; by 27 G. 3, c. 13, s. 22, it was made lawful to import French wines and olive oil from the French dominions in the Netherlands; by 56 G. 3, c. 37, prunes, the produce of Germany, may be imported into this country.

Some embarrassing questions having from time to time arisen as to the right of importing the produce of particular European States, in ships built in countries incorporated into those States subsequent to the passing of the Navigation Act; for instance, a question whether Prussian produce might be imported in ships built in East Friesland; it was enacted by 22 G. 3, c. 71, that the enumerated articles might be imported in ships the property of subjects under the same sovereign as the country of which such goods were the produce, although the country or place where such ship was built, or to which she belonged, was not under the dominion of such sovereign at the time of passing the Act of Navigation. It will be observed that this statute not only effected its immediate purpose of putting all the dominions of and sovereign on the footing of one country for the purposes of the Navigation Law, but also extended the right of importing, originally confined to ships "built in" the country of export, to ships "belonging to" such country. This, which appears to have been an act of inadvertence on the part of the framers of the statute, was rectified by the Act 27 G. 3, c. 10, s. 10, which provided that the enumerated articles should only be imported in British ships [see note (A.) as to the effect of this statute], or in ships "the build of any country or place in Europe belonging to, or under the dominion of the sovereign or State in Europe of which such goods or commodities are the growth, production, or manufacture, or of such ports where those goods can only be, or most usually are, first shipped for transportation." This Act was among those repealed in 1822, and for the next three years there seems to

have been no provision in the law analogous to it; but on the consolidation of 1825 the proviso was introduced into the Navigation Act, which is still retained, "that the country of every ship shall be deemed to include all places which are under the same dominion as the place to which such ship belongs."—(6 G. 4, c. 109, s. 15.)

The Act of 1822 (3 G. 4, c. 43, s. 6) made an important alteration in the law, by allowing importations of the enumerated goods to be made either in ships of the country of which the goods are the produce, or in ships of the country from which the goods are imported. At the same time the prohibitions against the importation of articles from the Netherlands, Germany, Turkey, and Russia were taken off. The grounds of these important modifications of our navigation system are stated in Mr. Huskisson's speech in the House of Commons, on the 12th May, 1826.

By 1822, tallow and tobacco had been added to the list of enumerated articles; since that time wool, shumac, madder, barilla, brimstone, bark, cork, oranges, lemons, linseed, rape-seed, and clover-seed, have also been added; while salt, pitch, rosin, potashes, wine, and sugar have been struck out.

The only alteration of any consequence that has been made in the European trade since the consolidation of 1825 is that effected by the Act 3 & 4 Vict., c. 95, noticed in the summary of the existing law, which was passed in 1840, in order to carry out the stipulation of the Austrian treaty of 1838, that Austrian vessels should be allowed to import Turkish produce from the mouth of the Danube.

IV. THE COASTING TRADE.

Law in 1660.

"It shall not be lawful for any person or persons whatsoever to load or cause to be loaden, and carried in any bottom or bottoms, ship or ships, vessel or vessels whatsoever, whereof any stranger or strangers born (unless such as shall be denizens or naturalized) be owners, part owners, or master, and whereof three-fourths of the mariners at least shall not be English, any fish, victual, wares, goods, commodities, or things, of what kind or nature soever the same shall be, from one port or creek of England, Ireland, Wales, islands of Guernsey or Jersey, or town of Berwick-upon-Tweed, to another port or creek of the same, or of any of them."

—(12 Car. 2, c. 18, s. 6.)

Law in 1847.

"No goods or passengers shall be carried coastwise from one port of the United Kingdom to another, or from the United Kingdom to the Isle of Man, or from the Isle of Man to the United Kingdom, except in British ships."—(8 & 9 Vict., c. 88, s. 8.)

INTERMEDIATE HISTORY OF THE LAW.

It will be observed that the Navigation Act does not prevent foreign-built vessels from engaging in the coasting trade. The prohibition extends only to such as are foreign owned. By the Act 1 Jac. 2, c. 18, an extra duty of 5s. per ton for every voyage was laid upon all foreign-built ships engaged in this trade. Subsequently, by 34 G. 3, c. 68 (extended to Irish ships by 42 G. 3, c. 61), it was enacted, that vessels engaged in the coasting trade should be wholly navigated by British subjects, and this provision is still in force by virtue of the definition of a British ship, given in the 12th section of the Act 8 & 9 Vict., c. 18. The absolute restriction of the coasting trade to British-built ships was not introduced till the consolidation in 1825.

The trade with the Isle of Man was put on the footing of a coasting trade in 1844.

NOTE (A.)—BRITISH SHIPS.

Though it may be generally stated that the Navigation Laws give a preference to "British ships," there is an ambiguity in the phrase, which renders further explanation necessary.

Under the existing law (8 & 9 Vict., c. 88, s. 13), no vessel is admitted to be a British ship unless registered as such, and navigated by a British master, and by mariners of whom three-fourths are British subjects, and no ship can be registered as British unless she be owned by British subjects and be of the build of a part of the British dominions; so that there are now three elements in the idea of a British vessel—the ownership, the build, and the navigation.

But in some of the early statutes these three elements were not all required, particularly in the Act of Navigation, which generally takes no notice of the build of the vessels in which the importations and exportations are to be carried on. In going through its provisions it will be observed that—

1. The plantation trade is confined to the two following classes of ships :

(a.) Ships owned by the people of England, Ireland, &c., and—

(b.) Ships built in the plantations, and owned by the people thereof :

It being in both cases required that the ship should be navigated by English.

2. The trade between this country and Asia, Africa, and America, is confined to ships owned by people of England, &c., or of the British possessions, duly navigated by English; nothing being said about the country in which the ships are built.

3. The European trade is confined—

(a.) So far as relates to Russian goods, and the bulk of the enumerated articles, to ships owned by people of England, &c., and duly navigated, or to ships of the country of export.

(b.) So far as relates to currants and Turkish goods, to ships English-built and navigated, or to ships of the country of export.

4. The coasting trade is confined to English-owned and English-navigated vessels.

5. In importations of fish double aliens' duties are charged on fish caught in other than English-owned vessels.

It will therefore be evident, that out of seven provisions only two have any reference to the build of vessels, while of those two, one (3. b.) has no reference to their ownership.

On further examination of the Navigation Act, it will be seen that exceptions from its general rules are in two instances (Levant goods and East India goods) made in favour of certain importations in English-built shipping; while in two other instances (Spanish and Portuguese colonial goods, and bullion and prize goods) they are in favour of importations in English-owned shipping.

Lastly, provision is made, in the 10th and 11th sections of the Act, for the prevention of frauds in the purchase of foreign-built ships, and for securing that such ships shall be wholly owned by English before they can avail themselves of the privileges which the Act confers on English-owned ships.

Thus far the Act of Navigation. The Statute of Frauds (18 & 14 Car. 2. c. 11) enacts (sec. 6, par. 2) that no foreign-built ship (that is to say, not built in [England, &c. or] any of His Majesty's dominions in Asia, Africa, or America) except ships purchased before a given day, and except prize ships, "shall enjoy the privilege of a ship belonging to England or Ireland, although owned or manned by English," "but all such ships shall be deemed as aliens' ships, and be liable unto all duties that aliens' ships are liable unto," &c. The former of the two passages placed within inverted commas, would, if it stood alone, appear to require that all English-owned ships should, in order to obtain a right to the privileges conceded to them by the Act of Navigation, be also British-built; but it seems that the second passage restrains its application to the case of duties, which are higher on aliens' ships than on British ships.

By a subsequent Act (15 Car. 2. c. 7, s. 6) no goods from Europe are to be imported into the British possessions except in English-built shipping; and see sec. 8 of the same Act. And by the Plantation Act (7 & 8 Will. 3, c. 22, s. 2), all importations into and exportations from the possessions must be in English-owned, English-built, and English-navigated vessels.

Prize ships, however, if British-owned, are and always have been entitled to the privileges of British vessels.

It may be noticed here that the system of registering vessels is first prescribed in the Act of 7 & 8 Will. 3.

In 1786 an Act was passed (26 G. 3, c. 60), by which it was provided, that for the future no ships should be entitled to the privileges of British ships but such as were British-built as well as British-owned and navigated. Ex-

ceptions were made in favour of foreign ships built before May 1786, and belonging at that date to English owners. These might still engage in all such voyages as were previously open to British-owned ships not necessarily of British build. From the time that these ships of 1786 and older date became worn out, the term "British ships" acquired the sense in which it is now used, except as regards the coasting trade, for which a further provision has been made, in respect of the composition of the crew, as stated under the head "Coasting Trade."

It is also necessary to notice the effect of some clauses in the Act 34 G. 3, c. 68, which provide that no ship registered or required to be registered as a British ship shall import or export any articles whatsoever unless it be duly navigated by British subjects. This places a restriction, previously unknown, upon the export trade of this country to foreign parts, and upon the import from Europe of other articles than those enumerated in the Act of Navigation. The Act further provides, that no such ship or vessel shall be navigated at all but by a master and three-fourths at least of the mariners British subjects. The corresponding provision in the present Act of Navigation is, that no British ship may depart from a British or colonial port unless duly navigated (sec. 19).

APPENDIX, D.

**SCHEDULE OF PETITIONS presented to the HOUSE OF LORDS in reference to the
NAVIGATION LAWS, during the Session 1847—48.**

Date of Presentation.	—	Numbers signing.
	<i>Petitions against any Alteration of the Navigation Laws.</i>	
7th Feb.	Of the Provost and Town Council of Glasgow	Provost, with the Seal of the Company.
10th Feb.	Of the Chamber of Commerce of Limerick	President and Secretary, with Seal of the Company.
25th Feb.	Of the West India Association at Liverpool	17
29th Feb.	Of Operative Shipwrights of the Port of London	1492
2d Mar.	Of Inhabitants of Ilfracombe	67
	Of Shipowners and Mariners of Ilfracombe	54
10th Mar.	Of Shipowners, Shipbuilders, Merchants, &c. of South Shields.	230
"	Of Shipowners, Master Mariners, Shipbuilders, &c. of the Port of Dundee.	1358
31st Mar.	Of Shipowners, Master Mariners, &c. of Dartmouth	367
4th April	Of Shipbuilders and Carpenters of the Port of Alloa	211
"	Of Shipbuilders, Carpenters, Ropemakers, &c. of Glasgow	248
"	Of Inhabitants of Leith	Provost.
8th May	Of Directors of the Chamber of Commerce and Manufactures, established by Royal Charter in Glasgow.	Chairman and Secretary, with the Company's Seal.
		Dean of Guild.
15th May	Of Merchants' House of Glasgow	43
5th June	Of Shipbuilders and Master Shipwrights of Liverpool	54
6th June	Of Inhabitants of Leith	46
8th June	Of Subscribers, Merchants, Shipbuilders, Shipowners, &c. at Leith.	
"	Of Shipwrights, Mast and Block Makers, Ropemakers, &c. of South Shields.	177
9th June	Of Provost, Bailies, and Town Councillors of Burgh of Port Glasgow.	Provost.
"	Of Shipowners and others of Stockton-on-Tees	82
"	Of Inhabitants of South Shields	184
16th June	Of Shipowners, Shipbuilders, Ropemakers, and others of Bristol.	4500
22d June	Of Provost, Magistrates, and Council of the Burgh of Peterhead.	Provost.
"	Of Merchants, Shipowners, Bankers, Feuars, &c. of Peterhead.	356
"	Of Shipowners and other Inhabitants of Berwick-upon-Tweed.	163
26th June	Of Shipowners, Merchants, &c. of the Borough of Fraserburgh.	—
27th June	Of Merchants, Bankers, Shipowners, Traders, &c. of Port Glasgow.	142
"	Of Shipowners, Merchants, and other Inhabitants of Greenock.	1840

Date of Presentation.	—	Numbers signing.
3d July	Of Shipowners, Traders, &c. of Workington	532
4th July	Of Committee of Merchants of City of Cork	President.
4th Aug.	Of Shipbuilders, Master Mariners, and others of Middlesbrough.	88
„	Of Seamen, Ship Carpenters, and other Artizans of Middlesbrough.	120
„	Of Shipwrights and others of Dundee	426
„	Of Shipwrights and others employed in the building, &c. of the British Mercantile Marine.	14
„	Of Riggers, Lumpers, and others of the Port of London ..	472
„	Of Shipowners of Montrose	49
<hr/>		
<i>Petitions against any Alteration of the Navigation Laws without Inquiry.</i>		
6th April	Of Merchants, Shipowners, and others of Glasgow ..	144
14th April	Of Shipowners, Merchants, &c. of the Port of Grangemouth.	48
5th May	Of Ship-boatbuilders of the Port of London	101
„	Of Ship Plumbers, Painters, and Glaziers of the Port of London.	214
9th May	Of Merchants, Shipowners, Tradesmen, Artificers, and other Inhabitants of Maryport.	177
<hr/>		
<i>Petitions praying that before any Alteration is permitted in the said Laws, a Select Committee may be appointed to inquire into their Policy.</i>		
21st Feb.	Of Shipowners and others of Ramsgate	55
„	Of Shipowners, Merchants, Master Mariners, &c. of Glasgow	261
25th Feb.	Of Shipwrights of Sunderland	832
„	Of Sailmakers and Ropemakers of Sunderland	115
„	Of Chain and Anchor Makers of Sunderland	296
„	Of Grocers and other Tradesmen of Sunderland	565
„	Of Master Mariners, Seamen, and Pilots of Sunderland ..	1389
„	Of Block and Mast Makers and Boatbuilders of Sunderland	91
„	Of Shipbuilders of Sunderland	47
„	Of Shipowners of Sunderland	394
„	Of Shipowners, Merchants, and Tradesmen of South Shields	277
„	Of Shipowners of Belfast	
„	Of Mast and Block Makers of the Port of London	Chairman of the Association.
„	Of Shipowners and other Inhabitants of the Port of Cardigan	168
„	Of Sailmakers of London	369
„	Of Shipbuilders, Shipwrights, and other Tradesmen interested in the Construction and Equipment of Ships belonging to the Port of London.	240
„	Of Inhabitants of Scarborough	Chairman of the Meeting.
„	Of Shipowners and Master Mariners of the Port of Exeter	142
„	Of Shipcaulkers of the Port of London	193
„		137

Date of Presentation.	—	Numbers signing.
25th Feb.	Of Shipowners and Master Mariners of the Port of Scarborough.	128
"	Of Shipjoiners of the Port of London	318
"	Of Shipwrights, Sailmakers, Ropemakers, and others of the Port of Plymouth.	330
"	Of Shipsawyers of the Port of London	470
"	Of Merchants, Shipowners, and others of the Port of Bideford.	514
"	Of Shipowners and others in the Boroughs of East and West Looe.	87
"	Of Shipwrights and Shipping Tradesmen of the Port of Scarborough.	96
"	Of Ship and Anchor Smiths of the Port of London	315
"	Of Master Mariners and Seamen of the Port of Plymouth	149
"	Of Shipbuilders, Shipwrights, and Rope and Sailmakers in Montrose.	244
"	Of Merchants, Shipbrokers, and others of the Port of Portsmouth.	54
"	Of Shipbuilders, Shipwrights, Rope and Sail Makers, and others in Montrose.	212
"	Of Mates of Ships, Mariners, and Seamen of Scarborough	114
"	Of Merchants, Shipowners, Tradesmen, and Artificers connected with the building and outfitts of Ships of the Port of Liverpool.	5726
2d Mar.	Of Shipowners, Master Mariners, and others of St. Ives ..	80
3d Mar.	Of Shipowners, Master Mariners, Seamen, and others of the Borough and Port of Whitby.	199
10th Mar.	Of Shipowners, Master Mariners, Seamen, and others at Kingsbridge and Selcombe.	123
"	Of Shipbuilders, Shipowners, and others of Workington ..	100
"	Of Shipowners, Mariners, Merchants, &c. of the Town and Port of Goole.	266
13th Mar.	Of Master Mariners and Seamen of South Shields now in Port.	549
16th Mar.	Of Merchants, Shipowners, and others of the Port of Fowey	956
30th Mar.	Of Shipowners of Great Yarmouth	108
"	Of Bankers, Merchants, and Inhabitants of Yarmouth ..	1412
"	Of Mayor, Aldermen, and Burgesses of Yarmouth ..	Corporation Seal.
31st Mar.	Of Shipowners and Merchants of Brixham, Torbay ..	93
"	Of Artizans and Mechanics	90
"	Of Mariners	78
3d April	Of Merchants, Shipowners, and others of Hartlepool ..	441
4th April	Of Shipowners in Newry	8
11th May	Of Shipowners and others in Whitehaven	75
<hr/>		
<i>Petition for the immediate Repeal of the Navigation Laws, &c.</i>		
13th July	Petition of the Citizens of Montreal, in the Province of Canada, in Public Meeting assembled, praying for the immediate Repeal of the Navigation Laws, and for the opening of the River St. Lawrence to Ships of all Nations.	—

APPENDIX, E.

Letter addressed by SIR JOHN GLADSTONE, Bart., to his Son, the Right Hon. W. EWART GLADSTONE, M.P. for the University of Oxford, on the occasion of his late Speech in the House of Commons, in favour of the Repeal of the Navigation Laws.

“Fasque, 6th June, 1848.

“MY DEAR SON WILLIAM,

“Last evening I had read to me the speech you delivered in the House of Commons, on Friday last, in favour of the Repeal of the Navigation Laws. I think your facts are fairly stated, but your conclusions drawn from them I cannot admit to be generally just in principle or well founded. It appears to me that in your attempt to justify and defend a general principle founded on the modern notions of free trade—which implies a desire to concede existing rights, because it is, in the present day, called liberal to do so—you work yourself into a labyrinth, from which you can only escape by the undue sacrifice of certain rights and privileges, which are possessed by and belong to us, and for which, if given up, I cannot discover that we are to receive in return any due and just consideration. Hitherto, the discussion of these interests has been confined to national treaties, and these founded on reciprocity, where there was a *quid pro quo*, to be the principle that an equitable consideration was conceded to us in lieu of it; but you propose to abandon rights which have been proved, by experience, to be natural, and nationally important and valuable. When the Governments of two countries meet to decide these interesting subjects, the one proposes to the other to relinquish certain branches of their trade, by laying them open under treaty, with the understanding that those with whom they treat possess similar advantages, which they are to relinquish. Thus, let us suppose that the United States propose, that if we will consent to admit the produce of the Brazils, or of France, to be imported into this country in American bottoms, subject only to such conditions as are required when these importations are made in British bottoms, to make to us in return similar concessions in favour of British shipping employed in carrying on a similar trade between the Brazils and France, and the ports of the United States. Here there is a clear principle of reciprocity adopted; a *quid pro quo*, which being acted upon, draws nearer, and into closer inter-

course and connection, those countries that agree to make such concessions to each other, and is therefore likely to prove for their mutual benefit; but such concessions can only be special, and founded on treaty; they cannot, without the risk of great sacrifices, be admitted or acted upon, under such general principles and practice as you propose to adopt. Thus, for instance, we have very extensive colonies and foreign possessions (many of them earned at the cost of British blood and treasure, and thus considered to be achieved by conquest, though now, I lament to think, likely to be rendered valueless to us by the present measures of our rulers), with which an intimate and constant intercourse is maintained and carried on in British shipping, productive of important advantages to *Britain and British shipowners*. If I understand you right, you propose to lay open this carrying trade to the shipping of other countries—for instance, to the United States. Now, it does happen that the United States possess neither colonies nor foreign possessions, and therefore have no such privileges to offer to us in return or to concede; it therefore follows, there can be no reciprocity in such a course of conduct—no *quid pro quo*,—but *all the advantages, whatever they may be, are to be given up by us, without a consideration*. You contend that in such a case, our colonists, having a choice of conveyances, some of them, perhaps, on lower terms than by British shipping, are willing to adopt them, and would reap the advantage. If this principle is to be recognised and acted upon, do you not at once lay the axe to the root of the tree out of which have grown the sources of our commerce, our wealth, and our maritime greatness? By laying them open, you propose to abandon to others the sources which support the superiority we have hitherto possessed in our ships, our colonies, and commerce—the sources of envy and jealousy to other countries. You say, that if you do so, in return we shall confer advantages on our colonies; as, for instance, you suppose a German ship carries emigrants from Germany to Australia, and on her arrival there the colonists should have the power of loading their wool or other produce, and, through such a foreign channel, of conveying it to a British market. If such a concession were to be made, the benefit to the colonist would only be incidental and unimportant. But whilst the transport of their produce is restricted to British shipping, the certainty of their finding employment secures the necessary supply on which the colonist may depend; but if laid equally open to the foreigner, who, with such competition, can have any dependence on finding employment?—thus, between the two stools, whilst you propose to benefit the colonist, you risk his being left without the means of sending his wool to market. But this is only a secondary consideration. We have, at great expense, established and settled our colonies: we have given them privileges, protection, and admission to our markets of consumption for their produce on conditions advantageous to them—concessions all calculated to promote a union alike beneficial to both, but which, under your propositions, are to be abandoned and thrown open to

the world—whilst that world, caring only for itself, makes no optional contribution in return, towards raising our enormous revenue—defraying or providing for our sources of taxation, local and general—or supporting our systems, institutions, our habits of industry, labour, expenditure, and consumption. These are wholly local, and depend upon ourselves; whilst you propose, with a hand of vast and liberal profusion, to lay open every source we possess, or advantage we enjoy, to the free and open competition of others, who, as far as I can discover, while we are to part with substantial good, have nothing to give or even to offer to us in return. If I understand you rightly, you are also disposed to lay open our coasting trade to the foreigner, which certainly, in many instances, would be not only gratuitous, but without a pretence to reciprocity. The principle of reciprocity might be urged by the United States, if she proposed to us to admit British shipping to participate in carrying on their coasting trade, provided the same privilege were conceded by us to American shipping in the coasting trade of the United Kingdom. If such an uncalled-for, unnatural, and inconvenient concession, with a sacrifice of local feeling, were to be made, I can discover no serious advantage it would be productive of to the interests of either, whilst it would be found to prove a source of great jealousy and risk of misunderstanding. But come nearer home, and let us suppose that the excess of shipping belonging to the ports of Hamburg and Bremen, built and fitted equally well with British shipping, though at a lower cost, navigated and provisioned on more favourable terms, and now spread over the ocean and advantageously employed in the commerce of the world, which seems rather a favourite object of yours—I say that if these bottoms from the opposite coast were to be employed in our coasting trade—let us suppose that great branch of it carrying the supply of coals from Newcastle and its neighbourhood to supply the consumption of fuel by nearly two millions of our population residing in London and its vicinity, employing many hundred sail of British ships, and many thousands of British seamen—suppose this trade laid equally open to the shipping of Hamburg and Bremen, what have they to give us in return? I answer, nothing, literally nothing; for they have neither coast nor coasting trade of any kind or description. Yet in this mania of liberty you with others appear disposed to make such vast and uncalled-for sacrifices. You may say that what we give up is to be occupied by others, and that the general trade and commerce of the world is to be extended and increased by it. That may be true; but the concessions and sacrifices are to be *ours*—the gains and advantages are to be given to others—whilst this country, raised to power and eminence by the advantages of situation, united with well-regulated liberality in our intercourse with others, but with a due regard to our own interests, supported by the wisdom of our laws and institutions, has gained a pre-eminence in the affairs of the world, which these new-fangled doctrines and theories are calculated to undermine, and ultimately to break

down and overthrow, but which, I would fain hope, by hastening a change of both men and measures, may be preserved to us unchanged.

“ These novel theories and dangerous experiments with which our legislation now teems brings to my recollection a favourite toast of a very old and respected, but a too liberal friend of mine, now no more, Mr. Thomas Booth, a well-known merchant in Liverpool—his toast was, ‘ May the world be our country, and doing good our religion;’ sentiments beautiful in the abstract, but totally incapable of application to the conduct and habits of mankind in their relations with each other. But, in the proposed mode of re-casting and liberalising our Navigation Laws, I think I see an attempt to introduce and act upon such impracticable doctrines. God, in his wisdom, instilled into the breast of man, self-preservation as the first law in his nature; but, our rulers, in the present day, seem disposed to give it only the second place. Once lay open our colonial possessions and coasting trade to the shipping and seamen of other powers, and, I ask, where is your boasted nursery that has hitherto manned your navy and protected your shores? If they are to be laid open, and passed into the hands of foreigners, who, in place of being our friends, may prove to be our inveterate enemies, and if we shall thus be cultivating and promoting the means and engines for our future destruction, what then is to become of your justly-boasted wooden walls?

“ You are aware that I am at present confined by indisposition, and that I dictate this letter from my bed by the pen of a third party. I am conscious you will find it abounds with errors and imperfections, yet notwithstanding, now in my eighty-fourth year, as a last duty and perhaps, tribute to the interests of my country, I give it to the public, and send it for that purpose to the columns of the *Montrose Standard*, from whence it may perhaps find its way to more general circulation.

“ I ever am your affectionate father,

“ JOHN GLADSTONE.”

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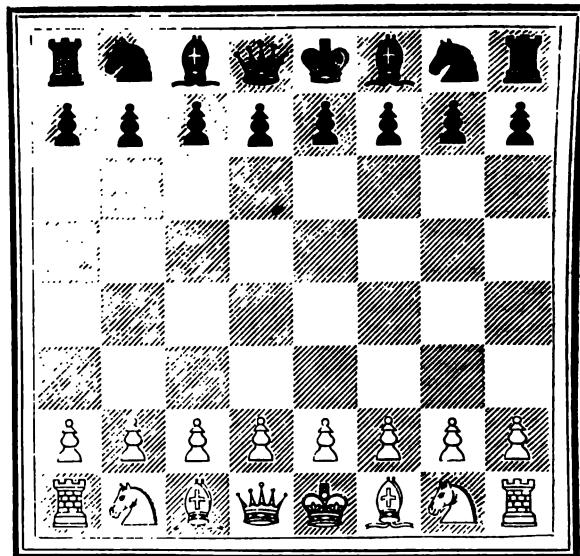
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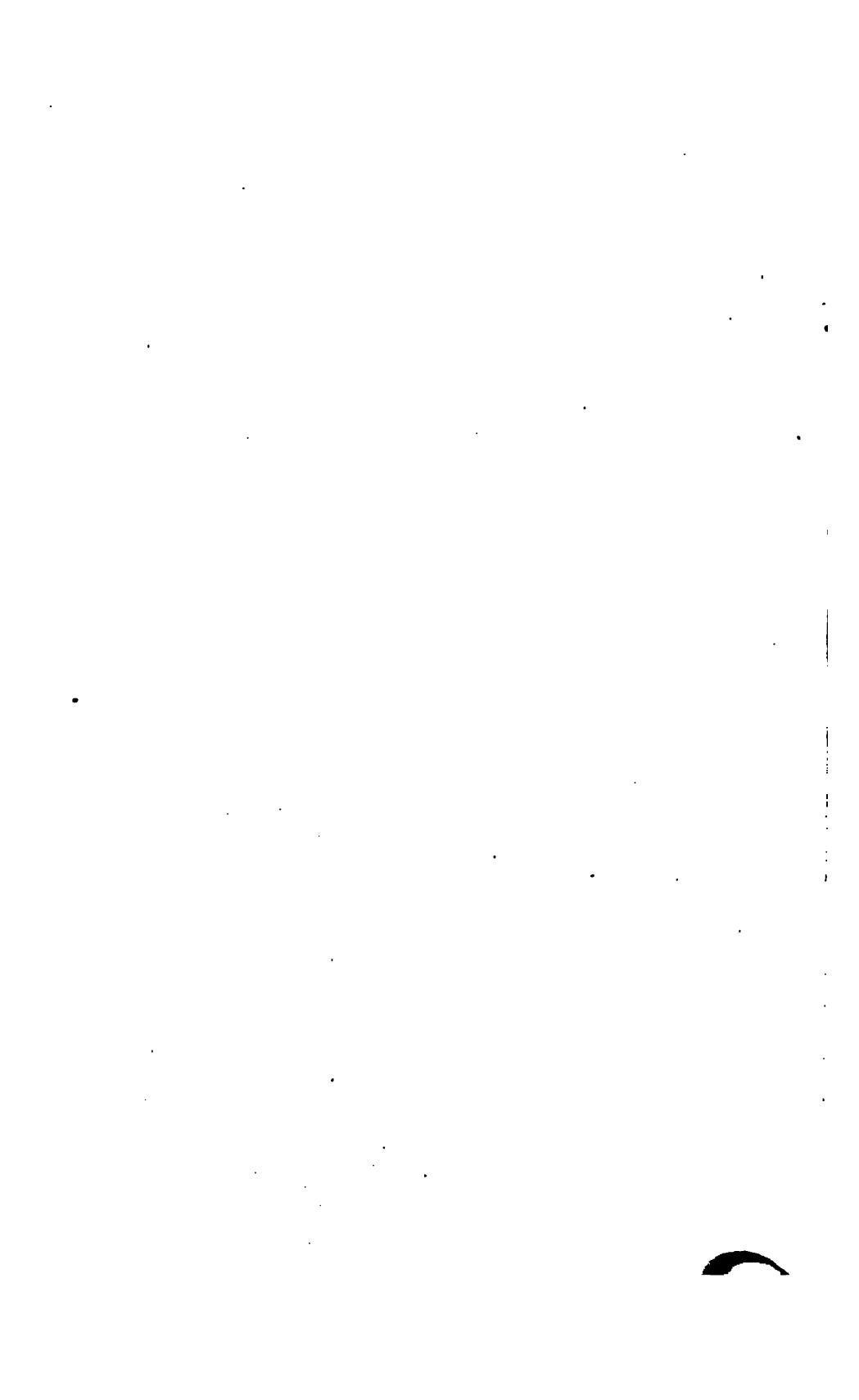
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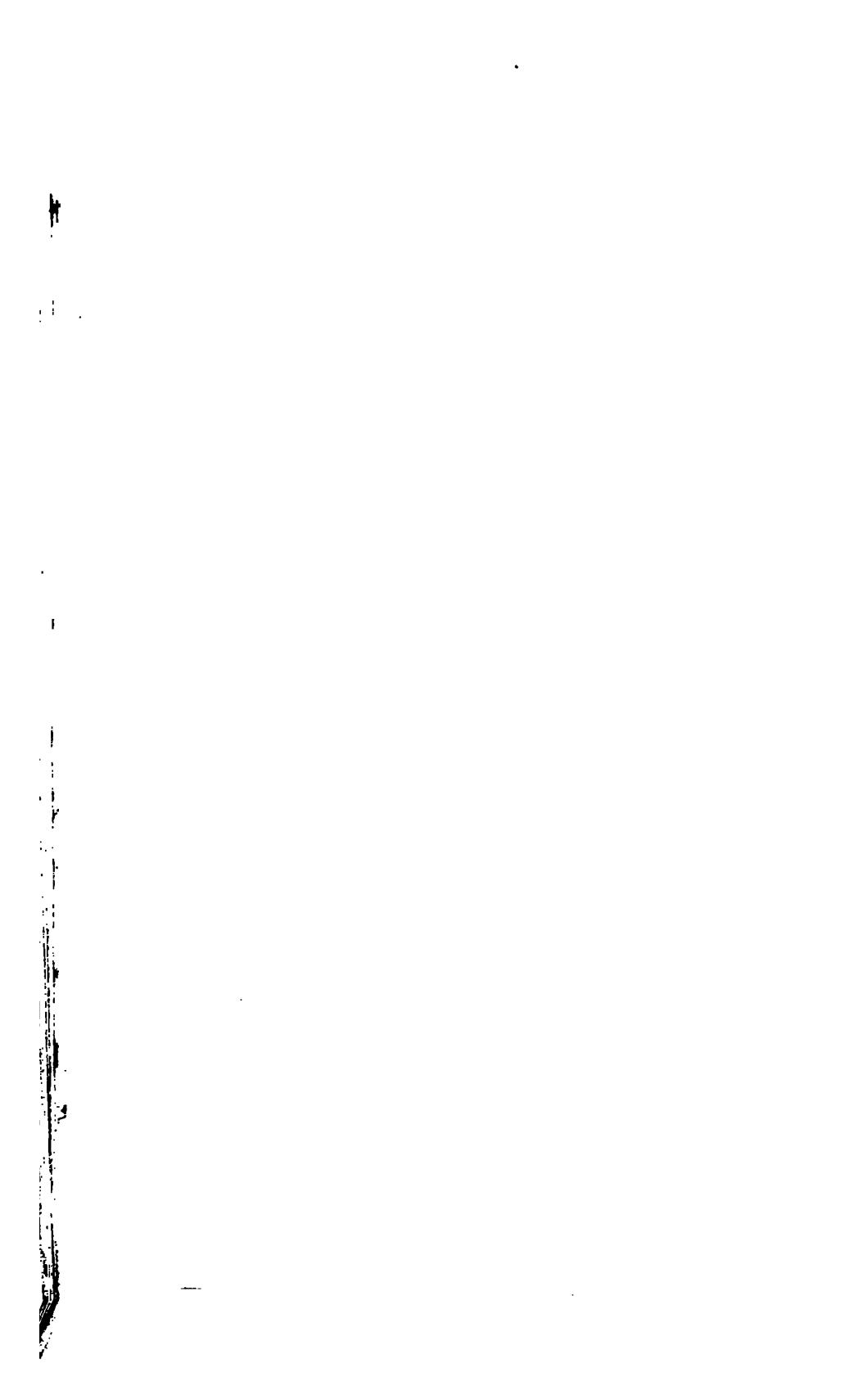
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